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THE NAGS HEAD
OR
A SEASON AMONG
“THE BANKERS”
A TALE OF
SEA-SHORE LIFE

BY GREGORY SEAWORTHY.

Philadelphia,
A.HART LATE CAREY & HART.
1850.



NAG'S HEAD:

OR,

TWO MONTHS AMONG "THE BANKERS."

A STORY OF SEA-SHORE LIFE AND MANNERS.

"Là, nous trouverons sans peine,
Avec *toi*, le verre en main,
L'homme après qui Diogène
Courut si long-temps en vain !"

J. B. ROUSSEAU.

"I was born to speak all mirth and no matter!"

BEATRICE.

BY GREGORY SEAWORTHY.

[Epseuch, of George F. Thompson]

PHILADELPHIA:

A. HART, LATE CAREY AND HART.

1850.

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TO

PARK BENJAMIN, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR:—

When, at the idle suggestion of a friend, I had whiled away some of the else unoccupied hours of a five months' passage homeward, by writing *a book*, you were pleased to pat the shy bantling encouragingly on the head, and to say a friendly word to the Publisher. May I, in acknowledgment of that kindness, present another, the youngest, to your Burchell-like caresses, in the belief of its fewer imperfections, and with the conventional, but hearty, assurance that I am

Yours, always,

GREGORY SEAWORTHY.

MERRY HILL,

Bertie Co., N. C.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE—THE DEPARTURE,	13
------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER II.

THE LUNCH—A GOOD NIGHT'S REST—DAYLIGHT,	18
---	----

CHAPTER III.

THE LANDING—THE HOUSE	23
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

BILIOUS FEVER,	26
--------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

A STORM ON THE BANKS,	32
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHAPEL,	37
-----------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

THE DOGS,	41
---------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GRAVE OF THE OAKS,	45
------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

OLD JACK,	70
-----------	----

CHAPTER X.

SAND-FIDDLERS,	75
----------------	----

CHAPTER XI.

THE PACKETS,	79
--------------	----

CHAPTER XII.

THE WRECK,	85
------------	----

CHAPTER XIII.

NAG'S HEAD—AS IT WAS AND IS,	96
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER XIV.

ROANOKE ISLAND,	126
-----------------	-----

CHAPTER XV.

THE SERVANTS,	141
---------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FRESH PONDS,	149
------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

AN EXCURSION TO THE INLET,	153
----------------------------	-----

CONTENTS.

vii

CHAPTER XVIII.

AMUSEMENTS,	159
-------------	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BANKERS,	161
--------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEPARTURE,	178
----------------	-----

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NAG'S HEAD.

CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE.—THE DEPARTURE.

WORTHY READER, a word with you! Were you ever at Nag's Head? Heard you ever of it? I shall provoke no jealousy on the part of Mr. Wiley, the author of "ROANOKE, OR WHERE IS UTOPIA," by saying a word or two of this Ultima Thule in THE OLD NORTH STATE Geography.

Briefly, then, a glance at the map will show you a long bank, varying from a few yards to some furlongs in width, extending like a vast breakwater along almost the entire coast of the Carolinas. Through this there are several inlets from the sea, leading into a cordon of beautiful sounds (among which the ALBEMARLE and the PAMLICO are the most considerable), which separate "THE BANKS" from the mainland. In some places, this ridge is as arid as the shores of the Dead Sea. In others, a dwarfish growth of pine and live-oak light up its grim features into a smile of hospitable welcome, from your packet-experience of bodily compressibility to the free air and unfettered gait of THE LAND. Not a little of the picturesque, too, peeps pleasantly out

from among the “Upguoines” (as the Bankers call the oak-crested acclivities), and, if I may burden the reader with my own preferences, NAG’S HEAD,

“With some fair spirit for its minister,”

appears to me to possess some very decided features of comfort not enumerated in any of the geographies as belonging to COBI or SAHARA, or whatever other “desert” the titled bard affected to long for as his “dwelling-place.” May I venture the opinion that his lordship would sooner have paid rent in the dust and cobwebs of Grub Street?

NAG’S HEAD is in latitude 35° 30' North, on a narrow part of The Banks, and about midway between Kill-devil Hills and the New Inlet; just at the northern entrance to Roanoke Sound. Enough of description. It was never my forte.

THE DEPARTURE.

To begin at the beginning. It was on the afternoon of a pleasant day in July, of this present year of our Lord, that we left the pretty village of H—, on the PERQUIMANS. I say *we*, not intending thereby to appropriate that much abused part of speech to myself; for there were little fewer than a score of us. On the morning of that day might have been seen a very manifest excitement among the carts (*Kyarts, à la Carolina*) of “the aforesaid precinct;” all the more manifest from the contrast with their ordinary meek demeanor. For, on almost any day of the long, lazy, listless, lingering (*vide Canning, passim!*) days of midsummer, you shall see them with heads sluggishly hung down, Quaker-like,

unpretending, passionless—perhaps I might say aristocratic, in their bearing and presence.

The mules, too, wore the air of bustle ; and their gravity stood out in large relief from the glistening eyes and teeth of their sable drivers, glee-inspired with the excitement of departure.

The carts were laden with every imaginable species of household conveniences, and were kept in motion for some hours in conveying to the river's bank the thousand and one articles of furniture necessary for a two months' residence at Nag's Head.

Three o'clock in the afternoon was the appointed hour for our departure ; but it passed, and the good schooner JOHN EDMONDSON still swung lazily at her moorings. Four o'clock came—and passed ; and five ; and six ; and then the carriage made its tardy appearance, with as ill a grace as a late guest at a dinner. There were already some few loiterers on the shore, but their number increased and multiplied ; for accompanying and following the carriage was a throng of masters, misses, and servants, to see us fairly under way. Such a bustle ! The decks were burdened with a quaint, domestic-looking, moving-day medley of furniture and luggage, among which there arise mistily to my recollection dim images that take the shape of jugs, trays, baskets, axes, beds and bedding, cart-wheels and bodies ruthlessly divorced, parasols, a venerable umbrella, and a bottle of Sands's sarsaparilla. In the waist was a Botany Bay-looking colony of ducks and hens ; and, forward, OLD JOE, the sleek, happy-looking boy, ingloriously destined to two months' hard labor in the sands of Nag's Head. Aft, thronging the poop, the taffrail, the companion-way and the cabin, were the

small folks, shouting, dancing, antic-mad ; while John, the baby—long life to him!—crowed like a young Stentor.

At last the fasts were cast off from the trees on the river's bank, and the draw removed to enable us to pass the floating-bridge. Up went mainsail, foresail and jib ; hard a starboard went the helm, and we were soon midway in the channel of the beautiful PERQUIMANS. A flutter of bonnets and white handkerchiefs, and a waving of hats, were the lingering symptoms of an expiring good-by. The breeze freshened. The sun sank lazily down to his rest, and ere long the pale beams of the waning moon,

“ That bring into the homesick mind
All we have *loved* or left behind,”

were glistening over river and village. I was fast lapsing into a sentimental abstraction, when I was recalled to consciousness by many a laugh from young and happy *compagnons du voyage*, and a score of questions from the same source.

The breeze freshened, not so much, by any means, as to give the most timid any fear that the JOHN EDMONDSON (that ever a vessel should have such a misnomer!) would *carry away* any of *her* spars, save in the common and entirely harmless way in which vessels *always* carry away their spars when they leave port. The little schooner behaved cleverly ; looking up in the wind's eye without ever wincing ; turning with almost military precision and quickness on her heel, and giving an occasional bound (for all the world like a school-girl's “ hop, skip, and a jump” after study hours) as if she scented the breath of Old Ocean himself.

Of course, there was no sea-sickness ; no shrieks of feminine alarm ; no tragic “O captain !” with clasped hands *à la Siddons*. Even the geese and hens were grave, and decorously maintained a high-toned retinue worthy of the first circles ; while OLD JOE’s resigned gravity was a tower of strength to the other quadrupeds ; videlicet, the two dogs, Jumper, the puppy (more of him anon), and Hector, some years his senior. I had last seen old Hector the gayest of the gay, in the canine circles ; now,

—“Quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore !”

Both the dogs were tied to the prostrate wheels of the dismembered cart.

The mate, MR. SPUNYARN, outdid himself. He was a spare, hardy, red-faced man, and scanty justice is done him in saying that he was *busy*. There was no place where he was not present “in the body.” Nothing escaped his vigilance ; and the manner in which he performed his multifarious duties, from the time when he hauled in the bow-fasts at H—— to the end of the voyage, was worthy of what Mistress Budd would have called “a full-jigged ship.”

The evening waned apace, and all hearts were happy in the prospect and assurance of “a quiet night of it” and a pleasant passage. We gathered together in a little knot on the weather-quarter, and sung. As the hours passed, symptoms of drowsiness began to manifest themselves, and one by one the children and the ladies disappeared. I was about to follow their example, when Gilbert came up to me with a touch of his dilapidated hat, and a most deferential scrape of the dexter foot.

"Massa Greg'ry."

"Well, Gilbert?"

"Ise got a message for you."

"A message?—for me?"

"Yes, massa."

"What is it Gilbert?" said I, when he had gone forward.

"Why, you see, Massa Greg'ry—hope you won't take no 'fence of the liberty—it's cole an' damp like, and de boys is got a little whisky!"

With a laugh at Gilbert's mysterious *message* (low be it spoken), I tasted the Monongahela and went aft.

And then——; but suppose we begin a new chapter!



CHAPTER II.

THE LUNCH.—A GOOD NIGHT'S REST.—DAYLIGHT.

AND then—as I was about to say at the close of the last chapter—the lunch.

J—— had somehow discovered (such a genius for *discovery* should be encouraged and fostered) a tray, wherein were deposited indiscriminately,

"Tros Tyriusque, nullo discrimine,"

a goodly ham and a loaf of corn bread, with other eatables, to which, after the solemn "message" I had received, I was prepared to do what is usually called, in speaking of such matters, justice. Nor were J—— and CAPT. E—— at all averse, *to all human appearance*, to

the performance of this part of the duties of the voyage. Not HORSESHOE ROBINSON himself could have made greater havoc among the contents of the tray than did we, though the worthy soldier would, out of all question, have given the account of killed, wounded, and missing with somewhat greater military precision.

Midnight came. And let me, "in this connection," as the ministers sometimes say, remark to the reader that nothing tragic is intended to be conveyed in this much-abused and overladen expression. Nothing like what such an expression might shadow forth in "*The Bravo of Venice*," "*The Three Spaniards*," or the *Tales of the Inquisition*!

I say midnight had come. And in this there is nothing remarkable. Nor is it more remarkable that at that hour we should begin to feel drowsy. For the captain, he was far too anxious for the safety of his passengers to allow himself any repose. He stood as silently and watchfully as a sentry on outpost duty, at the helm, keeping "a bright look-out to windward." His mate was not less on the alert; and I felt, as I went below, the last of the stragglers, that, so far as human foresight and watchfulness were concerned, we might rest as calmly

"— as when sleep approached me, nestling!
From the sportive toils of thoughtless childhood."

I went below. There, on the cabin floor, lay J—, in an attitude which I thought was meant to convey the idea that he was asleep.

If I have not already done so, it is proper to say here to the reader that the day had been a warm one. The month of July, in the northern hemisphere, usually is

warm. The latter part of the month is not usually much cooler, I think I may venture to say, than the first. It may also be remarked that the cabin of a schooner of sixty tons, when the schooner aforesaid has lain in a river sixty miles from the ocean, with a July sun melting the pitch from her decks for some twelve hours, is probably not what might be called in dog-days even "a cool place." Without any disrespect, moreover, to CAPT. E——, it is proper here to state that I found in his berth a feather bed, such as would have delighted Madam O'Grady, with a most generous supply of covering thereunto appertaining.

I turned in !!!!!!! O July and August! O the coast of Africa! O desert of Sahara! and O whatever *other* warm places not herein mentioned and set forth the fame of which has come to mortal ears! I can but pause and laugh as I write it down. I turned in to sleep in the captain's berth. With a constancy and with a perseverance, such as I flatter myself have not been known since the days of Latimer and Ridley, did I essay to close my eyes. And here permit me to observe how unnecessary and inadequate an invention was Dr. Thompson's *steam* bath! What nostrums are your medical sudorifics and diaphoretics! Talk of night-sweats to *me*! The very recollection throws me into a perspiration.

The reader is prepared for the result. I turned out, that is to say, I *rose*; and after mature deliberation as to what could be done "under the circumstances," I finally laid down beside J—— on the cabin floor, my long legs being very *literally*

"Cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,"

by the narrow dimensions of the apartment. To complete the many tendencies which my worthy reader has already discovered towards "a good night's rest," J—— set up one of the most dismal, low-pitched, monotonous, heart-rending snores that it has been my lot to listen to in "this sublunary vale of tears!"

"O Dii immortales!"

After a feverish sleep, I awoke unrefreshed, and went on deck. The JOHN EDMONDSON was jumping, and pitching, and rolling, and performing divers similar antics not announced in the bill, very evidently to the intense satisfaction of our worthy mate. With the weather tiller-rope wound tightly around the tiller, and leaning "to windward" at an angle of forty-five degrees, his eye wandering alternately to the binnacle, the wind's-eye, and the head of the sails, did he guide the good schooner on her way. Not Palinurus himself—reverently be it said—could have better conned our little craft. He said never a word; but an occasional roll of the quid from the lee to the weather cheek, a setting together of the teeth, and a sort of complacent smirk peculiar to an old salt, and unlike the French or Spanish grimace, all said, as plainly as *words* could have said it,

"No you don't, old lady! *I've* got the helm *myself*, an' you needn't undertake to play any of your tantrums with *me*!"

And then he would look at the tiller, and the sky "to-windward," and the sails, with an expression that said very plainly,

"Wal, I *should* like to know what's got into the

bloody old barky to carry such a weather-helm to-night!"

Attached to the taffrail, and just beneath the traveler, was a bench for the convenience of passengers. Upon this I lay down, and, to my infinite satisfaction, got a very comfortable nap. When I awoke, day was dawning.

"There's NAG'S HEAD, Mr. Seaworthy," said our polite captain; and I looked. And there, in the gray of the morning, its sand-hills, and live oaks, and white cottages dimly visible, lay the promised land, my home for two months,

NAG'S HEAD.

Forth from the cabin and hold, and from their resting-places on deck, came passengers and servants, not many of us all, as may well be supposed, *en grande toilette*. The *youngsters* led the way.

"Oh-h-h-h! oh! oh! there's Nag's Head!" "Do look at the sand-hills!" "And there's Roanoke Island!" "And there's *our* house!" "There's a fishing-boat!" were some of the expressions of delight which I heard on all sides. Preparations for breakfast were on foot. The galley was so low that the cook was obliged to sit down in the doorway to kindle the fire and to superintend the cooking. His activity is worthy a record; and, as a specimen of his ingenuity, it may be mentioned that he ground the coffee, holding the mill between his knees, and making use of a cigar-box to receive the pulverized kernels. The meal was soon in readiness. The ladies and children breakfasted on the house, while I was similarly engaged on the taffrail.

A lighter came off to us, and in this and the schooner's yawl we went ashore. A walk of half a mile brought us to

THE HOUSE,

of which I propose to give some little account in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE LANDING.—THE HOUSE.

WHEN you come to anchor at NAG'S HEAD, you go ashore in the yawl belonging to the packet, or in one of the boats, or *flats* (scows), sent off by mine host of the hotel. A *row* of half a mile brings you to a little market-house, standing over the water, a few rods from shore. From this to terra firma you walk on a narrow staging of plank.

Handing my valise to a sleepy-looking black boy, I straightway set forth along the shore of the sound for my new home. Did you ever walk in the sand, worthy reader, for a considerable distance? Do you remember anything in life that so moderates any undue exuberance of animal spirits, or a chance phase of romance or enthusiasm in your feelings? Do you know anything more discouraging? Probably not. Well! saving only Provincetown, on Cape Cod, and the empire of Nantucket, and the Great Sandy Desert, there is no place

where sand is more abundant; sand constituting the small portion of *terra firma* yet left at NAG'S HEAD above the surface of the sea.

Along the interminable sand-beach did I resolutely plod my way for some two or three furlongs. My guide then turned to the left, and began the ascent of a very considerable hill. Sinking to the ankle, at times, in the sand, we at length reached the summit. Directly in front of us, but some ten or twelve feet lower, surrounded by a dwarfish growth of live-oak, was the house. It is a small story-and-a-half cottage, shingled and weather-boarded, but destitute of lath and plaster.

On the eastern side, it has a comfortable piazza, where the family gather of an evening for a social chat, and for the enjoyment of the sea-breeze. It commands a wide view of the ocean ; and there is scarcely an hour of the day when you cannot see one or more vessels sailing by, brigs and schooners "wing and wing," or a "square-rigger" with both sheets aft, or else close-hauled and standing off and on. It is also the retreat, after dinner or tea, for the gentlemen to smoke ; and two or three times every day you may see little Tom bringing a coal of fire on the tines of a fork for the especial benefit of the smokers. Our host makes the piazza useful in still another way ; suspending on oaken hooks a goodly hammock, and enjoying a siesta with commendable zest.

The cottage contains five apartments ; and they accommodate, at this present time, fifteen persons. C—— occupies the north chamber with me. There being no ceiling, we enjoy the patterning of rain upon the roof ; that most delicious of luxuries when one is drowsy. On the other hand, however, when we have a brisk breeze

from the west, without rain, the sand comes sifting through every nook and cranny in the roof and weather-boarding ; covering our beds and clothes, and filling one's hair and eyes—ay, and mouth, with a rapidity almost incredible.

Altogether, the cottage is what is sometimes called “*a love of a home.*” Its roof rises but little above the evergreen oaks by which it is hemmed in. It is retired, quiet, snug, comfortable ; and that, I fancy, is enough to say in praise of one house. We have gray-haired age ; sturdy manhood in its maturity ; youth and prattling infancy. We have faithful servants. We have good-humored faces—and we are happy !

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

My first impressions of NAG'S HEAD were very favorable. The mere escape from the malaria, and fevers, and heat of Perquimans was quite enough to raise my spirits ; but when we hove in sight of the harbor, in the gray of the morning, and saw the sun rise over NAG'S HEAD, making still more than the usual contrast between the white sand-hills and the dark, beautiful green of its clusters of oak ; when we discerned the neat white cottages among the trees, the smoke curling lazily from the low chimneys, the fishing-boats and other small craft darting to and fro, the carts *plying* between the shore and the dwellings, the loiterers who were eager to know who and how many had arrived, what wonder that I was prepared to be pleased with my new home ? And then the dear, delightful sea-breeze, calling up old memories of a lustrum of my life in which I roamed over many a clime of “the big world.”

With that same breeze came vigor, strength, and animal spirits to which I had long been a stranger ; and, as “it came on to blow” soon after we landed, so violently that our luggage could not be sent ashore, I went forth upon the sands, on the hills, among the oaks, down to the sea-shore, and to the—ten-pin alley. Against this first feeling of vigor I had been cautioned ; but I rambled too much, and when the morrow came, I was ill. I commenced the labors of my little school ; but with a feeling of languor and a dull aching in every bone of my body. Dr. A—— prescribed blue mass and morphine, and I flattered myself that I should be well in a very short time.

CHAPTER IV.

BILIOUS FEVER.

I WAS doomed to be disappointed. There came one morning a feeling of lassitude and dizziness. This was succeeded by a remarkably chilly sensation *for the time of year*, and this was followed by a raging fever !

With a vague presentiment of long sickness did I go to my little chamber. My cheeks burned, my temples throbbed, and I tossed, in restlessness and pain, from side to side. Dr. A—— was sent for ; just the man for me, as I found him full of life and fun ; of a sanguine, hearty manner, and one of the most agreeable men in the world to converse with.

"Ah ! Mr. S——! got a fever, eh ? let's see !" and he felt my pulse. "Got you down at last. But I'll have you up again in two days. Most always kill such a fever the *first shot*. Never fail the second ! Take this pill to-night, and with the help of tonics we'll have you on your feet directly !"

And with such encouragement to me, he forthwith retreated with Mr. W—— to the piazza for a smoke. His manner, I am fully persuaded, was of as much benefit to me as his prescription. If there be one thing more disheartening than another to an invalid, it is to see his physician come into his apartment with a face as long as an undertaker's or Don Quixote's, or a mute's at a funeral, and shrug solemnly his broad shoulders, and with a sigh and a shake of the head, such as have not been heard or seen since the days of the Roundheads, gravely announce to him, in a tone of profoundest orotund, that he is in a bad way ! Out on them, say I. Give me Apollyon rather than Giant Despair, if I must have either.

On the following morning, I rose at an early hour, feeling decidedly better. There was no recurrence of the chill or the fever. So great was the apparent improvement that the doctor left me no prescription.

"Just keep quiet, now, Mr. Seaworthy," said he ; "be a little careful of your diet, and in a week you'll have the appetite of a shark. When people come to Nag's Head, you see, they think they can do anything ; run about in the noonday sun ; eat soft crabs for supper ; dance till midnight, and, maybe, drink a dozen juleps."

"Pretty well for *one* day, doctor!"

"Yes ; but that's not *all*. They go to bed with their

windows all open ; sleep, perhaps, in a strong draught of air, and then—as a matter of course—come the chill and the fever, and your humble servant the doctor !”

During the day, I took morphine. When night came, there came with it horrid dreams, and deep, exhausting sleep. I awoke in the morning not feeling so well as I had expected. It is a common saying that disappointments never come singly. It proved to be true ; and had there not been so much said and written upon the uncertainty of human expectations, I am by no means sure that I should not devote a chapter to that fertile theme.

The chill returned ! and, it is needless to add, the fever came after it more intensely than before. Then came the weakness and languor of disease ; the thousand whims, the tendency to fretfulness, the ever-changing caprice of appetite, the ungovernable thirst, the longing for company at my bedside. The servants and children were enjoined to be quiet. My visitors stepped quietly and softly when they came in, and ever and anon there would appear, just far enough inside the door to be visible, an inquiring face whose very *look* was enough to elicit the response

“A little easier !”

“Rather more fever !”

“Doing nicely !” or,

“About the same.”

Mr. W—, who arrived on the very day that I was taken ill, was untiring in his attentions. I could hear him below—my hearing being sharpened by disease—giving particular directions to the servants as to their being quiet, and taking care not to disturb me. And

then he would sit by my bedside and talk with me so cheerfully and so confidently concerning my speedy recovery, that

“—— the brood
Of dizzy weakness, flickering through the gloom
Of my small, curtained prison, caught the hues
Of beauty spangling out in glorious change,
And it became a luxury to lie
And faintly listen.”

Sometimes he would lie on the bed with me, and sometimes read to me. Mrs. W—— sent very often to know how I was, and whether she could do anything for me. The elder Mrs. W——, who seems like a mother to me, was untiring in her kindness. J—— would come in and read me asleep. Even little S——, our curly-headed pet, paid me a visit.

My friend Dr. M—— came while I was sick; and both he and Dr. A—— were my constant and welcome visitors.

Nor ought I here to omit mentioning the kindness and fidelity of the servants. One of the boys slept in the chamber with me. Old 'Titia, a sort of *matriarch* among the servants, was ever ready to do anything I requested, and that with the evident good feeling which gives to such offices of kindness their true value. What I say of her I may say of them all.

I grew worse. My disease assumed a more dangerous phase, and I became hourly weaker. My spirits flagged. I grew desponding. I told Mr. W—— where to find my private papers. From the first I had had fears as to the new phase of the disease, and had begged for a prescription which had once saved my life. At last

Dr. M—— prepared it for me, gave it to me, and, on the following morning, I knew and *felt* that I was BETTER! And a thrill of subdued joy and a silent prayer of thanksgiving to the Great Physician were my morning offering, as the bright, clear August sun rose from his ocean lair.

Slowly, but steadily, I recovered ; and oh! how glorious to me were

“The common air, the earth, the sky!”

A new week dawned upon me, and with my little family, my school around me, I gladly resumed my customary round of labor.

There are few—I hope there are none—who have not felt that the chamber of sickness has taught them some of the gravest and best lessons of life. Could we know the first feelings of the restored invalid, prominent among them all would appear a thrill of hearty gratitude to Heaven for the gentleness with which the hand of the Chastener was laid upon him. To the busy, the active and energetic, sickness alone brings the first solemn *pause* in life, when they *must* think soberly of other things than markets, and money, and the bustle of the marts of trade.

And then, too, comes—for the first time it may be—the sense of the frailty of the “clay tenement,” upon the strength and symmetry of which we have so complacently and so proudly looked. With this feeling come, naturally and certainly, the charity which so well becomes us for the frailties and faults of others; sympathy for their afflictions and sorrows, and good will to every son and daughter of Adam. In this new phase of earnestness, whatever of imperfection we have seen

in the institutions of our blessed religion, all vanishes in the light of its greater excellencies. Our bigotry and our prejudices melt as the morning frost; and if there were a lurking feeling of enmity or revenge lurking in the heart, O! how does it melt away before the deeper feeling of gratitude and love!

It is in the chamber of sickness, too, that the man hitherto skeptical as to the good will of his fellow-men meets with that genuine, disinterested kindness, and the thousand little offices of affection which mock all his misanthropic theories. A world of hitherto undiscovered sympathy survives the surrounding desolation of "total depravity," like the moss on the fountain's edge in the depth of winter.

It is a TEST, too—that same sick chamber. It has a voice to which no man ever yet failed to give heed. His energies, whatever they may be, must there be assayed. The mute, but quick and earnest look of inquiry with which the sick man would fain read his probable fate in the looks of the attending physician, is of itself enough to betray the otherwise secret feeling of intense interest with which he watches the varying symptoms. In *this* man you behold a calm, noble, fearless spirit, not afraid to meet the Great Source which it, in some degree, resembles. In *that*, the nervous shrinking from the very *thought* of death. There is something sublime in the quiet gathering of the energies of a mighty spirit for the last grapple with the grim messenger.

For myself, my chief anxiety as to the close of life is in regard to the nature of the disease which will probably terminate it. Though it has attacked me very seldom, I have long had—perhaps most persons have a

similar feeling—a presentiment that sooner or later its agonies will call for my stoutest energies, and master them. I have seen at sea, in a man-of-war, victim after victim held ruthlessly and helplessly in its iron grapple for days and weeks; and then the jack was thrown over them, and the hammock, with shot enclosed, sewn tightly around them.

The shrill pipe and hoarse voice of the boatswain and his mates called that most solemn of all their calls, “**ALL HANDS! BURY THE DEAD!**” The burial-service was read; there was one dull splash, and the tall ship filled away on her course, leaving my comrade “fathoms deep” in his ocean grave.

Good reader,

“So live
That, when thy summons come,”

thou mayst go to thy resting-place

“Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”



CHAPTER V.

A STORM ON THE BANKS.

MY little attic, in which I am only separated from “the seasons’ difference” by the shingles and weather-boarding, makes me more observant than I have ever

been before of the phases of the weather. Not a sigh of the wind; no

“Low lisplings of the summer rain;”

no rustle in the small leaves of the live-oak shrubbery by which the house is surrounded, can escape my ear. From the infancy of the rain, when its first tiny footfalls patter so softly and musically upon the roof, to the clattering of the shower and the pelting of the storm—I hear it all, and thank Heaven that I am at NAG’s HEAD.

At times, there are furious storms from seaward. If they come on gradually, you cannot see the live-long day a single sail. You hear, at first, a dull, heavy, monotonous roar of the breakers. A dense mass of clouds gathers low in the eastern horizon, and—just at nightfall it may be—comes the first ominous pattering of the rain. The wind rises gradually and drives the big drops furiously against the house. Darkness, as a pall, settles down on earth and sea; the shutters creak and slam; the wind howls and whistles, and anon, through every accessible nook and cranny, comes the rain.

And then! in all the fanciful but unpoetic and practical varieties of night-habiments, with small attention to attitude and the arrangement of drapery, do half-wakened sleepers look for a moment upon the watery intrusion. I say *for a moment*; for straightway there begins such a commotion as has not been since the building of Babel. Carpets are taken up; clothes are taken down; beds are moved; crevices are caulked, and every possible defence made that ingenuity can devise against the common enemy.

In these storms, the wind varies in its direction; sometimes a point or two, sometimes—after a brief lull—coming from the point opposite to that at which it began. Sometimes there seems to be a “coalition” among the winds, as if Old Æolus had given them reins:—

—“Velut agmine facto,
Quà data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perflant:
Incubuere mari, totumque à sedibus imis.
Unà Eurusque, Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus, et vastos volount ad littora fluctus.”

When I entered the breakfast-room this morning, the storm, which had been raging violently during the night, seemed unabated. The rain was driving through every nook and cranny of the weather-boarding. Dr. M—— suggested the propriety of holding an umbrella over the kitchen chimney, by way of increasing the chances of a hot breakfast, and the remoter possibility of dinner. Mrs. W—— was superintending the putting up of a small stove. The sofa was wheeled out from the wall, and a little tub behind it was receiving the drops of water that were coming plentifully down from an upper window. It was very manifest, from its general appearance, that it had not escaped the general calamity of the past night.

The children were seated, singly or in little groups, learning their morning lessons. The boy Bill stood in the doorway of the kitchen, looking out with a disconsolate and abstracted air upon the dismal scene. Down came the rain in white spray-like sheets, and driving with a furious clatter against the window-panes. The wind was whistling, too, and a rickety old shutter thumped with a most doleful and monotonous dullness against the weather-boards.

What a night must it have been for the poor sailor ! Four long hours, nay, perhaps the live-long night, exposed to the fury of the storm ; obtaining a partial shelter under the lee of the weather bulwarks ; standing patiently and silently at the wheel, his eyes almost sightless from gazing so long at the dimly-lighted and unsteady compass ; the rain dripping from his stiff sou'wester, and blown fiercely in his face—these are some of his hardships. Perhaps he was aloft, the vessel tossing and pitching so as to employ all his strength at times to cling to the yard ; the heavy, water-soaked sail flapping upwards in his face, and defying his efforts to “spill” it and pass the gasket. And some of the thousands of old Ocean’s children may have gone to their final home. A ratline has parted, a gasket has given way, or the feet may have slipped upon the foot-rope ; there are wild cries, almost unheard in the fury of the storm, of

“A man overboard ! a plank ! a handspike ! the hen-coop ! Lower the boat ! No ! no ! for your lives !”

A pale face and glaring eyes are revealed to you, in the foam beneath the quarter, by a sudden flash of lightning ; a faint cry is heard, and he is gone from your sight for ever.

“O Night !
And Storm ! and Darkness ! ye are wondrous strong !”

But I was describing the scene in the breakfast-room. There was a medley of exclamations that will give the reader some idea of it.

“It don’t seem to gee !” said Isaac, as he was trying to adjust the stove—one of the most troublesome, by the by, of household tasks.

"Law me!" exclaimed E——, who had several times changed her seat to avoid the rain, "everywhere I go, the rain comes down!"

"It comes faster and faster!" quoth Tom.

"It's leakin' down where you're sittin'!" said another; and John, the baby, was roaring "ma! ma! ma!" at the top of his stentorian voice. Many a solemn look, meanwhile, was directed towards the window, down the panes of which the water was running in streams, and at a large surface on the weather-boarding, growing gradually larger, and threatening an ultimate inundation. Neither of the dogs was visible, both having crowded to their kennel beneath the piazza, and, to all appearance, resolutely determined to sleep out the storm.

Our beds are yet safe; but I am told this "*isn't a patch to what I shall see in September; not a primin' to it!*"

Poor Isaac, a negro who supplies us with fresh fish, had just "staked down" his nets last night, when the storm came on. He gave us a somewhat graphic account of it.

"I'd just got 'em fixed, ye see," said he, as he finished the story, "an' de wind chopped round t' de nor'ard, *and I begun to think I'd better leave!*"

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHAPEL.

— “Amœna vireta
Fortunatorum nemorum, sedes que beatas.”

ABOUT a stone's throw from the hotel is a little chapel. It is a wooden structure, of small pretensions to architectural beauty, or outer or inner decoration, yet commodious, neat, comfortable. Like the dwellings around it—like almost all of them at least—it is destitute of ceiling. The weather-boards, joists, and shutters are neatly whitewashed, and the altar has latterly received a coating of white paint. This last, to give the praise where it is due, was the work of the clergymen who officiate there, Rev. Mr. F—, of Elizabeth city, and Rev. Mr. S—, of Hartford.

Its position is indeed a happy one. It stands pretty nearly in the centre of a diminutive forest of live-oak, the underwood all growing in primitive freedom and luxuriance. You approach it from several directions, through paths shaded and overhung by the evergreen foliage, and it is not until you are within a very few yards of it that you are conscious of its existence. The branches of the surrounding trees almost touch its walls.

Here, in the gray morning, so early as six o'clock, you may see mother and daughter, sire and son, quietly ga-

thering for their morning devotions. As your eye strays inquiringly around, while waiting for the late-comers, you may see here a lady whose

“Customary suit of solemn black”

points her out as one of earth's mourners. There you discern the pale, attenuated features of some half-recovered invalid. In yet another seat, is a round-cheeked boy, or a fair-haired girl, as intent upon the liturgy, to all appearance, as was ever Thomas à Kempis at *his* devotions. And, side by side with them, is gray-haired age, turning the well-worn prayer-book with hands that have lost the steadiness of younger days. And then—shall it be confessed?—you might, by sheer accident, catch the glance of a dark eye from beneath as dark a hood, and the shadow of an envious green veil, dreadfully destructive to the devotional feelings with which you may have threaded the winding dew-bespangled paths to the little chapel.

I shall not soon forget my first Sabbath at the chapel. I had just left my sick chamber. Starting sooner than the rest of the family, in order that I might walk slowly, I could see the villagers wending their way on foot, or in the indispensable cart, towards the place of worship. There was no “bell, sending its sober melody across the fields,” but in all directions, punctually to the hour, did they gather to the chapel. Before I reached it, I was attacked with some of my recently-departed symptoms; but, after a few minutes' rest by the wayside, I went on and entered. A goodly audience had already assembled, and the seats were soon filled.

There was the usual rustle of silks and flutter of fans, and turning of heads; and, but for the side structure in

which we were seated, I might quite easily have imagined myself in Trinity Church in New York. Alas ! for the olden days at NAG'S HEAD ! (I shall have more to say of them.) Fashion has created her exacting altars, and crowned her gay victims even here.

I saw the clergyman as he entered. I set him down at the first glance for a man of Irish origin, and without further ado promised myself a good sermon. If I had had any doubts as to his parentage, the "Dearly beloved brethren" with which he began dispelled it, and the earnest son of Erin "stood confessed." A lady *led* the singing, both chants and hymns, with a clear, rich, hearty voice, that seemed to convey her own enthusiasm to the whole audience.

The text was Jonah, iii. 9, and the discourse in reference to the cholera. Instead of a dry dissertation upon repentance and its fruits, the preacher conveyed us in imagination to the streets of Nineveh ; pointed us to the prophet as he stalked onward among the jeering crowd, and bade us hear his husky tones as he cried, " Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown !" Then followed the description of the consternation of king and people, and their repentance. " The morning sun," said the preacher, " of that dreaded day rose in calmness and beauty over Nineveh, and the uplifted cup came not to her trembling lips."

Then came an appeal to those who were drowning all sober thoughts in the whirl of pleasure and fashion, a brief peroration, and he had done. Seldom had a preacher so stirred my deeper impulses. I walked quietly through the throng of loiterers at the door, and walked homeward. A chilly sensation came over me as I walked along. It increased as I went onward, and,

after a vigorous effort to convince myself to the contrary, I shiveringly tottered up the stairs and lay down upon my bed, with a very decided impression that I had “a chill.” I hope I may be forgiven for a momentary feeling of vexation. I had been boasting of my restored strength and appetite, and had relaxed very considerably the strictness of my diet; and to have a chill STEAL on me so without notice—like a bailiff on an unsuspecting debtor—*it was unpleasant!* The fever came, of course. But, on the following day, fortified by quinine, I went to the little school-room, and accomplished—*how, I hardly know*—its round of duties.

Thus ended the first Sabbath on which I had been able to go to the little chapel. I have often been there since, and always with regret that I have so seldom sought its silence and its soothing influences in the still air of the early day. There is something in the hour that has always commended itself to the devout, as the most favorable in the day for the communion which every heart seeks (no matter what its professions) with the great and good Father of us all.

“ How amiable,” saith the Psalmist of Israel, “ are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts !”

CHAPTER VII.

THE DOGS.

“Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If *she* inspire, and *he* approve my lays.”

POPE.

THE residence of a southern planter is a little world of itself, combining some of the elements of the old antediluvian and subsequent phase of government, known as the patriarchal. Our household here numbers upwards of twenty; of whom one-third are negroes. We have three horses, and two other quadrupeds, to which I propose to devote a short chapter; that is to say, our “twa dogs,” HECTOR and JUMPER.

To begin with the latter. He is a dog somewhat beneath the medium size; larger than that particular species usually called “*the tarrier*” (*lucus, a non lucendo*; for not one of them ever *tarried* five minutes in the same place!) and very decidedly smaller than the Newfoundland or St. Bernard. Jumper’s color is a yellowish-white, approximating to that of cream; his hair ever smooth and sleek, though, it must be confessed, occasionally the worse for some canine habits very decidedly untidy.

Looking at Jumper, as Lavater would have done (had he ever seen him), it is to proper to say that his—Jumper’s, and not the physiognomist’s—characteristic

expression of countenance is that of all-prevailing, and absorbing, and controlling good-nature; reminding one of people who squeeze your hand and look affectionately into *your inmost eyes* at the first dawn of acquaintance; shadowing forth (if so cool a word as "*shadowing*" be here admissible) the noontide devotion of a luminary so undisguisedly warm in the gray of its morning. There is a glassy, glistening glare of his over-good-natured eye that prevents your ever forgetting him when you have once seen him.

I have said that this good-nature of his is his distinguishing trait. I repeat it. It is proof against the most direct, and plain, and emphatic, and practical, and—to all save himself—unmistakeable hints. Cuffs and kicks, to his all-over-shadowing charity, are delicate attentions which, for their legitimate and intended purpose, are lost upon him. Could he speak, he would very likely say (like one of DR. LEVER's characters), of people who do not especially kick or thump him—"he never said 'good morning,' 'by your lave,' 'd——n your eyes,' or any other civility in life!"

Jumper's general cream color is relieved by a shading of black around his eyes and nose, that contributes very materially to the expression of his otherwise inexpressive countenance. His ears and tail are uncropped; but he has a most unfortunate kink in his back, which speaks eloquently of some encounter and "hair-breadth 'scapes." It gives a very queer, drifting, wriggling, undignified sort of motion—"abaft the waist," if I may borrow a marine phrase—that gradually wrinkles your phiz into the quietest grin in life, as you gaze at him.

It may have been the same oddity of motion, which, with other symptoms, induced me to set down his tem-

perament as *nervous-sanguine*. He has all imaginable sorts of puppyish motions. He is never composed, never at rest; but, like a gawkey who has blundered into the atmosphere of high life, and rocks his chair, twists his fingers, and plays with his "guard" while he talks to you, is ever fawning, wriggling, moving, and wagging his tail in the highest conceivable state of nervous excitability. He would never do for the city—not he. "He don't know the ropes." He has no tact, no judgment; and were he as big as *Æsop's ass*, would just as inconsiderately leap into your lap.

"*Ye aint gwoin to jump into my lap, anyhow!*" said OLD TITIA to him, one day, in my hearing; "*tearin' me all to pieces!*"

Thus he gets kicks, cuffs, and scolding on every hand. Always in the way, always victimized, always good-natured. Old Hector is very evidently disgusted with him, and avoids anything like intimacy. His dignity, however—as will be readily supposed—is lost on the incorrigible good-nature of his inexperienced young friend.

Another trait of character in poor Jumper is his utter indecision and want of proper confidence in himself. He lacks independence. He is over-lavish of his good offices and courtesies. The reader will find my idea better expressed in the Hunchback, where, on Clifford's loss of fortune, Modus and Helen berate him to Julia, as giving bows "fifty for one; and *that* begrudged." On old HECTOR,

"Magnanimous Hector,"

he is ever fawning. His sapient look, his years, his gravity have manifestly inspired JUMPER with the

"most distinguished consideration," the profoundest respect. His jokes are all evidently relished, all pass current with his young Boswell. But HECTOR evidently amuses himself with his "fidus Achates," and looks with undisguised merriment on the slatternly and nerveless way in which Jumper drags his toes in the sand in his most excited and vigorous trot.

I cannot close this chapter without a very brief notice of the elder of "the twa dogs." And it is here necessary to state that "HECTOR" is only a *nom de guerre*; the name being used here in deference to a feeling of delicacy on his part in having his name seen in print!

His *personal* appearance is not over prepossessing; his form not being of very nice proportions, and his color of *no prevailing peculiarity*; spots of black and white very equally dividing the empire. He is elderly, knows the ropes, has a sober good-humored twinkle in his grayish eye that wins your regard. He has been, it must be confessed, somewhat supercilious towards his young friend; but then that may be pardoned when one thinks of the utter want of congeniality between the two. He has not been seen here for some days, and I am credibly informed that he has left bed and board here, and gone to the hotel, or its vicinity. The ostensible reason is a penchant for an elderly woman who was kind to him in his younger days. Some have insinuated the proximity of the butcher shop, but to this I give no credit, the suggestion springing probably from private jealousy or malice.

It is to be hoped that he will return. Better things were expected of him, and it is not yet too late to re-

trieve his suffering reputation. It is yet too soon for him to say

"Sat patriæ Priamoque datum."*



CHAPTER VIII.

THE GRAVE OF THE OAKS.

I DO not know whether or not I have yet mentioned one of the features of NAG'S HEAD, which a stranger would be most likely to remember. It is this; the gradual entombing of whole acres of live-oaks and pines by the gradual drifting of the restless sands from the beach. Not a more melancholy sight in the world. In a morning's walk, you may pass hundreds of enormous oaks, the topmost branches barely visible above the surface, while their roots may be scores of feet beneath the surface, *strangled* by the merciless sands. Here and there you may see a victim around whose highest branches a vine has entwined itself, green and beautiful still, while the tree on which it leans is dead; just as you have seen a devoted wife, familiar once with the glitter of prosperity, clinging yet closer (and therefore the more beautiful) to the husband whom she has

* The reader may care enough for his fate to read this record of the fact, that he departed this life somewhat out of the customary decline and termination of canine old age. Even Jumper himself has recently come home with a broad, deep gash, frightfully near the arteries in his throat.

promised life-long love and fidelity. There is one of these not far from the house, to which I often walk in the gray of the morning. It is surrounded by others as large as itself, and by some that are still larger. Its companions are destitute of any appearance of verdure. Indeed, they must have been dead these many years. They may be some fifteen feet in height above the engulfing sand. The limbs of one of them are outstretched like huge arms, as if the brave old tree had died in its last mute, yet eloquent act of supplication to be spared from so horrible a death. And there it stands in the self-same imploring attitude still. Suns rise and set; storm and calm succeed each other; seasons whirl away the chaff of winnowed time; the young and the old come here and look upon it, and depart, yet there it stands,

“As stricken into stone.”

Near this is the tree of which I first made mention. There is still less of it visible than of the other. It is dead, like its companions; but over its top, in many a graceful wreath, a beautiful vine has thrown its thousand tendrils. Its green leaves are the only vestige of life in an area of scores of acres. As I have already said, I often go there of a morning. A morsel of legendary lore may possibly endear it to others as it has to me.

THE STORY.

The “season” at NAG’S HEAD, in the summer of 184-, was a gay one. The spring and summer had been unhealthy, and, early in July, family after family packed up the necessary household conveniences, got on board

the little packets, and were speedily domiciled at their respective homes on the sea-side. The hotel was thronged. Scores of children and youth, whole regiments of young ladies and young gentlemen came thronging on, until the worthy innkeeper stood aghast. However, by dint of close stowage, and other expedients not necessary herein to be set forth, all had a place whereon to lay their heads. As a matter of course, among such a throng, there was no lack of amusements. The mornings were spent at the bowling-alley, in fishing, or fox-hunting. The dinner and the siesta occupied the afternoon ; and tea and the toilet occupied the time until a venerable negro, after a few preliminary turns of the screws, gave forth the startling, thrilling, life-awakening notes of his favorite violin. *Presto! change!*

In came the dancers, the sets were made up, and, with a tone such as new-created sheriffs shout “O yes!” “O yes!” at the sessions of the most worshipful the Court of Common Pleas, the sable musician exclaimed *BALANCE ALL!* and the evening’s amusements were begun. And then not very brightly did the pendent *lanterns* shine

“ — o'er fair women and brave men.
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell.”

Among the sojourners at the hotel was a young man of gentleman-like appearance, whose little interest in the gayeties of the place attracted general attention. True, he would now and then enter the saloon to look at the dancers, especially on those evenings when the hall was at the disposal of the children, though he never

danced himself. Grave as he was, and he was so even to melancholy, when you *could* win a smile from him there was never a sweeter one. Occasionally he would chat with one of the very few acquaintances he seemed to have made, and such was his power of thought and felicity of expression that it is no exaggeration to say that

“The list’ner held his breath to hear.”

He had a fine voice, too; and it was more perilous than he seemed to suspect for some of the fair dancers to observe its musical cadence.

It was observed that he was much addicted to long and solitary walks; and a young man who had the curiosity to follow him, discovered that he usually went to the vine-covered oak of which I have spoken. A friend with whom he became more intimate than with any one else, informs me that he gave the following account of his melancholy moods, and his seclusion from the gayeties of life.

I am an orphan. I was adopted, when a mere lad, by Dr. ——, of Washington City. He is one of the best of men, as you know that he is one of the best of physicians. I could not possibly have loved a father more than I ever loved him. God forgive me for ever leaving him! He lives there still. You may see him any day on Pennsylvania Avenue—that noblest of all American avenues—riding or walking along at a brisk pace, with a kindly smile on his face, and a nod for everybody. He is universally beloved, for he is ever kind, and noble, and generous. He makes no parade of his charities; he is not

"One of your ten and twenty pound subscribers,
Your benefactors in the newspapers,"

Who keep

"A running charity account with Heaven;"

but many a poor heart has been gladdened by his unostentatious benevolence. God bless the good old man ! All my recollections of him are happy. They have been —they *shall* be—my salvation. I have been a prodigal. I have fed upon the beggarly husks of "the far country."

Dr. — is, of all the physicians I have ever known, the most studious and indefatigable. When retained in a case—to use a legal phrase—he is untiring in his researches in the books, in his personal attentions, in the study of the particular symptoms of the disease, the temperament, habits, and condition in life of the patient. Perhaps no living physician was ever so successful in his combination of simples to meet peculiar symptoms. And yet, absorbed as he invariably was in some one or more of the many cases which came thronging upon him, he never lost sight of the claims of society and the domestic circle. No child more simple ; and he was never more happy than when surrounded by children. There was no air of bustle, of importance, of dignity ; there was no fuss ; there was no formidable barrier of cautious reserve to break through. The light of his genial smile converted everything into some likeness to its own benignity ; just as the sun makes the darkest substances even *give back* as well as *enjoy* his rays.

What wonder that I loved him ! What wonder that I hung upon his footsteps as if I were his shadow, and followed him into every street, and lane, and alley of

the city! Trust me, there are few pages that so initiate the tyro into the Eleusinia of life as those which a medical practice opens to him in the heart of a great city. And with *him!* You could not see him thus engaged in his labors without feeling a desire to do better, to *be* better; and love and reverence for him went ever hand in hand.

It was my delight to nestle in a huge leather-backed arm-chair in his office, and to watch him while he was investigating a case. Sometimes I lounged upon the sofa, and very generally fell asleep on it at a late hour of the night, leaving him still absorbed in his books.

One of these evenings I can never forget. It was, I well remember, during the harvest moon, well nigh a year ago. Never have I seen a finer evening. There was not a cloud in all the heavens. The moon was at the full, and the stars shone with more than their wonted brilliancy; glittering, gorgeous—one mighty SEA of light and beauty. I could hear from the avenue—for the office was on the street—the hum of voices, and the pattering and shuffling of many feet; and I caught now and then a strain of delicious music from the windows of Carusi's.

Small attractions these for the doctor, though he was one of the devoutest of Nature's worshipers. He had apparently a new case, for I saw him take down book after book, and some of the oldest and mustiest, as if he had met with some phase of disease of a very unusual character.

“Um!” he would exclaim occasionally. “Yes, that looks a little like it!”

And then he would lean his head upon his hand, as if buried in thought, and muttering

"No! no! that won't do!"

He would take down another book.

"Fred, my boy, you'd better go to bed. I shan't be ready to retire for a long while yet."

And, without looking to see whether I went or not, he resumed his labor. My curiosity was now aroused, and I resolved to keep awake and observe him. The hours wore slowly away, and midnight came. He started suddenly as the clock struck. The watchman was passing.

"T-w-e-l-v-e o'clock, an' all's well!" drawled that drowsy functionary.

"No, my good man, all's *not* well!" and he pulled the bell furiously. Black SCIP made his appearance.

"Scip."

"Sah."

"You know where Mrs. A—— lives, on —— street?"

"Yes, massa."

"Well, go round there and see how Miss Mary is, and tell the nurse I'll be there in an hour."

"Yes, massa."

The old doctor now closed his books, and leaned his head thoughtfully upon his hand, remaining so long in perfect silence that I began to think he must be asleep. All at once, however, he started; lifted his glasses over his lofty forehead, paused a moment, and then sprang up from his chair.

"By the Olympian Jove!" exclaimed he, in a low, but exulting tone, "I have it. *Eureka!* She shall live. I shall *SAVE* her!" And, with a school-boy spring of irrepressible joy, he upset a pyramid of books, with the chair and the inkstand, seized his cane, and hurried out of the office. He had got into the street, bare-headed, when old Scip, who had just returned, reminded

him that he had forgotten his hat. He returned, and when he again left the office, I gave a wink to old Scip, and followed him. He strode furiously on along the avenue—and “*the avenue*” in Washington, you know, means Pennsylvania Avenue—as far as — street. There, at the corner, he came full tilt in contact with a plethoric watchman, who was about to consign him to “everlasting redemption” and the watch-house, when the doctor gave his name. A few doors farther, and he sprang lightly up the marble steps of a noble dwelling. I followed him. Before going to the chamber, he stopped a moment in the hall, and sent the servant, who met him at the door, with a message to the nurse. While the negro was gone, I slipped in unperceived; and when the doctor ascended the stairs, I contrived to follow him without attracting the notice of the servant. Fortunately for me, he left the door of the sick room ajar. He approached the bed-side with his usual quiet, noiseless step, and taking a small, fair, attenuated hand in his own, applied his finger to the wrist.

“So, Molly, getting better, eh? Keep up good courage, my dear. We'll have you at Carusi's in a week!”

There, reposing upon an embankment of pillows, lay a fair girl. She could not have been more than seventeen at most. Her hair had escaped from restraint and lay in masses upon the pillow, throwing the pale, beautiful face into full relief. The nurse stood near with clasped hands, watching the doctor's eye as if to divine the fate of the patient. And then, as if she knew not what else to do, she would re-arrange the vials and cups upon the stand, with a care-worn, weary expression that made my heart bleed for her.

“There, Molly,” said the doctor, “there's a prescrip-

tion I've put up myself; something unusual for me: but I wouldn't trust *anybody* else to put it up for you. There—not a word now!" seeing her about to speak. "Good night, my dear Molly! you'll be better to-morrow, my word for it. God bless you!" And, bending over her, he kissed her pale forehead. I made a precipitate retreat, and got home in time to be snugly in bed when he came.

She was saved! You are aware how intimate becomes the relation between the medical adviser and the family whom his skill has laid under such obligations. The intimacy extended to my mother and sisters, and I need scarcely tell you the result. Mary A—— became the centre of every hope, and thought, and purpose; and I was not long in making the fact known to her. Nor were her parents slow to make a similar discovery, though I had been pluming myself on my skill in preserving the secret from all the world.

Mr. A—— called me into his library one day, and very quietly said to me that he had for some time been aware of my feelings towards his daughter.

"The d——l you have!" exclaimed I, utterly thrown off my guard. The expression offended him; and he continued, in a more haughty tone—

"You are aware, sir, that you are too young to think of marriage, even were you in professional life, in prosperous business, in the way of political preferment, or in such pecuniary circumstances as would justify your taking that very important, I may say the most important, step in life. Be assured, however," said he, perceiving how terribly the blow fell upon me, "that I am disposed to be your friend, and to aid you in any way which you will point out."

Fool that I was, I answered him tartly, was bowed with icy courtesy out of the room, and rushed into the street in a state little better than sheer madness. Until the gray of the morning did I pace my little chamber, in a paroxysm of passion. I threw myself exhausted upon my bed, and slept until noon. To the inquiries of my father if I were sick, and what ailed me, I made some blundering reply that failed to satisfy him. He left me, however; and I employed the afternoon in writing a score of notes to Mary, and burning as many. I dressed with unusual care, and as the clock struck eight, I left my chamber and directed my steps to — street.

"Is Mary at home?" said I to the porter.

"No, massa; Miss Ma'y ben guoin away."

"Where?"

"Don't know, massa. She ben guoin airly dis mornin'; way down Virginny somewhere. Guoin to school, I b'lieve."

Semel insanavimus omnes; and I am no exception to the rule. I went stealthily to my chamber, took what little money I had, packed some of my best clothes, and books, and other articles, and, going to an old Shylock of a pawnbroker (whom may the gods reward!) sold them all to him for the paltry sum of ten dollars! Of this beggarly sum even, he managed to rob me partially by giving me English sovereigns instead of half-eagles. But I was not to be turned from my purpose by trifles. I went to a slop-shop, bought me a fustian jacket, trowsers of the same, and a tarpaulin; and as the day broke next morning, I stole out quietly, and took the road for Baltimore. In the cars I should have been recognized,

and I therefore resolved to go on foot. It was a cool, bracing morning, and my step was springy and buoyant as I strode onward in a fever of excitement. I heard the bell of old McL——'s academy, which always rang at daybreak; and its tones, with the associations it roused, brought the hot tears to my eyes.

But I was soon absorbed by new thoughts and impressions. I was *free*. From a child I had always been impatient of restraint. To kindness I was as sunshine; to anything else I was as untamable as the hyena. No wonder, then, that I bounded on; that I ran, and leaped, instead of walked along; and that I actually shouted aloud "*I'm free! I'M FREE!*" I trudged stoutly on, looking enviously in upon the happy cabins and farm-houses, and amusing myself by the Aladdin-like construction of palaces, which all my subsequent experience has been pulling down.

I began to be weary. The sun poured down his scorching rays upon me, and as I began the last four leagues of my day's journey, it seemed to me that I must sink down exhausted by the wayside. My thoughts turned homeward. Why had I left them all? the good old doctor, my more than mother, and my adopted sisters? Why had I not gone after Mary, traced her from town to town, and won her in spite of them all? I looked down upon my fustian attire; I pulled off my tarpaulin; I looked down upon my dust-covered shoes, within which my feet were aching in every joint, and, in spite of all the stoicism I had resolved upon, I wept long and bitterly. I had but a few dollars. What should I do? Work there was, enough of it; but how was *I* to get it with my girlish frame and hands?

But I was too proud to turn back. The die was cast. I had staked all upon it. I would do wonders, I thought. I would come back rich, if not famous, and then Mary should be mine. God bless her! She *knew* that I loved her. *I* knew that I was not less dear to her. They had *torn* her away, and, in the bitterness of that hour's unutterable misery, I cursed them for their ruthless cruelty.

At last I reached Baltimore. It was just at night-fall. Little thinking of the change in my appearance, I went to one of the best hotels, as I had been accustomed to do, and was recalled to a very vivid sense of my condition by the scarcely disguised look of surprise, and the meaning smile of the clerk as I asked if I could be accommodated there for the night.

"We are *full* to-night!" said he, after a moment's conference with another person. I turned on my heel and sought humbler quarters. I slept at the —— Inn, in the upper part of the city. There was a motley set, I remember, in the bar-room; but the greater part were teamsters, who had come from the western counties with their huge wagons laden with tons of the produce of their farms.

As you may readily imagine, I was not long in finding my way to my chamber. It was small, comfortless, dirty. Now that I had halted, I felt, far more than when I was walking, the overpowering sensation of extreme fatigue. My feet were sore and swollen, and my limbs ached so that I could not sleep. I fell at last into a most profound slumber. When I awoke, it was day. A drizzling rain was falling, and everything around looked chilly, gloomy, and cheerless. I was speedily dressed, and having paid my bill, I recommenced

my journey. It occurred to me, however, that the highway, as soon as I had got beyond the curbstones, would be wet and muddy ; and, as I had but little money, I resolved to go to the wharves, and procure a passage to New York by water. I was sauntering along and looking at the vessels, when a voice quite near me accosted me, in gruff sailor tones, with

“Hello, shipmate ! I say ! Don’t you want to go a-fishin’ ?”

“ Go a-fishing ?” echoed I, in some surprise.

“ Yes, go a-fishin’. The skipper ’ll give you twenty dollars a month. We’re goin’ to the head of the bay to fish for herrin’. If you say you’ll go, it’s a bargain.”

“ Well, I’ll go.”

“ You *will* ?”

“ I will.”

And, throwing aside my fustian jacket, I aided him in his work. He was discharging a little schooner, of some fifty tons, of a load of wood. This we soon accomplished ; and I was not sorry to finish the work, as my hands were dreadfully torn by the splinters. There were a few lighter jobs during the day. The stores were got on board, and at daybreak the next morning we got under way. Another schooner, about the size of our own, got under way a few minutes later, and came bounding along in our wake. I shall never forget her skipper ; a fine, manly-looking, sailor-like young man—for, as his vessel passed us, he very coolly lifted his tarpaulin, and said, with a good-humored smile,

“ Good by ! I’ll report you !”

Burly John Oldham, the same man who accosted me on the wharf, was at the helm of our vessel. He took

an enormous quid of tobacco, *fussed*, fidgeted, exhausted the Palinurian tactics ; but in vain ! Our neighbor left us. It came on to blow ; and, as the wind was from the northward, it grew bitterly cold. As we could not lay our course, we were obliged, of course, to beat. The water flew all over her decks, and, shivering with cold, I crawled below. Old John Oldham, his face as red as England's flag, maintained his position, his gravity, and his reputation at the helm. Occasionally, he would give his quid a fierce thrust from one cheek to the other as some curling breaker sent the spray into his face, and gave the tiller a sudden jerk that well nigh upset him. Never a word said he, meantime, though the wind was increasing to almost a storm ; but his compressed lip and glistening eye said, as plainly as *words* could have expressed it,

“ O ! it aint no use, old barky ! I've seen salt water outside o' the capes, and I aint agoin' to be flustered by a little *sprit* of a nor'wester in this ere little mill-pond. The bloody old Chesapeake 's gittin' sort o' *riled* to-day ! ”

Once, I remember, when we were going in stays, the schooner wouldn't come into the wind. We wore, and in doing so the fore-gaff was nearly carried away. What with the swearing and shouting, and the clatter of ropes and sails, I had made up my mind to be shipwrecked. The wind abated, however, and having repaired damages, we stood on, and reached our destination at nightfall. At daybreak the next morning we again got under way, and soon reached the fishing-beach. The seine seemed to me at least a mile long. I was placed at the windlass, and right lustily did I work, until noon, among the brawny fishermen. I sank

utterly exhausted upon the ground and fell into a profound sleep. From this I was very speedily awakened, and not in the gentlest way in the world, by the summons to dinner. This was of fat pork, fried herrings, and bread. Utterly unable to work, I begged Mr. B—, my employer, to release me. After some efforts to persuade me to stay, he consented, and I took passage that very evening for the head of the Bay. A short walk the next morning brought me to the railroad; and, following it to the next station, I seated myself in the cars.

It was sunset when we reached Philadelphia. I went to a less frequented hotel than the one I first entered in Baltimore; but from *that*, even, the reception I met with was none of the most cordial; and I remember thinking, as I walked to the lower part of the city, that a fustian suit and a tarpaulin, though well enough under some circumstances, were not the best possible recommendations at a fashionable hotel. I entered a plain, old-looking tavern not far from the wharves. There were half a score of shabby-looking loungers gathered round a coal-fire, in a dilapidated grate, which sent forth one of the most villainous of odors—

“A very ancient and a fish-like smell,”

of which I would be very sorry to have Pictou or Pennsylvania own the paternity.

The landlady, an Irishwoman, fastened her large eloquent eyes upon me as I entered, and looked closely, though gently and kindly into mine, as I asked if I could lodge there for the night.

“Ye can do that same,” was the reply. “Bring a chair, Pat, ye thaif o’ the world! don’t ye see the lad’s

fatigued intirely? Ye'll be the better for a thrifle to ate, I'm thinkin,'" added she, addressing me.

I had determined to go without supper, for my money had dwindled away to a single shilling.

"No, I thank you, madam," said I; "I am very tired, and would like to go to bed."

"Och! bother! niver expect me to listen till *that!* Ye're *hungry*, lad, forby bein' tired; and it's not far ye'll be from bein' sick this blessed minnit. *Ate* something, man; its free till ye; an' to bed ye'll not go without supper in the house o' Margaret McGuire!"

With a silent invocation of Heaven's best blessings on the warm-hearted hostess, I seated myself at the table; she, meanwhile, continued to talk as I made my simple repast.

"It's not in the like o' this you're used to ate, I'm thinkin,'" said she; and, without appearing to notice my embarrassment, she added,

"I've a lad o' my own, as old as yersel' maybe. He's gone to *say*. Ochone! bad luck till the day he wint! He's wid strangers, maybe, like you; and I wouldn't *slape* av I thought any one in a furrin counthry 'ud let him go till his bed without atin' a mouthful of parathies, or a dish of bread and milk, av there was no betther to be had."

I strolled out after supper, and whiled away a half hour in looking into the shops. As I turned away to go to the hotel (if I may so dignify it), I bethought me of a gentleman whose acquaintance I had made a year before, and who was then a boarder at the Marshall House. I went to the hotel. The porter who answered my timid ring replied to my inquiry for Mr. ——.

"I b'lieve de gemman not in. I'll see, though," added he, as he saw my earnest look; "jis wait a minnit."

He returned with the intelligence that Mr. M—— was at home. I followed him to the chamber.

"Dis am Massa M——'s room."

The breeding of the gentlemanlike M—— was not proof against the change in my personal appearance; but the startled look of wonderment faded into a far graver expression, and this last was followed by one of his usual welcome smiles. I frankly told him all. At first he remonstrated.

"Take off this," said he, touching my fustian jacket. "In an hour's time I'll have you in proper trim. I can furnish you the money to return, and a line from me to the doctor will set all right."

To all he could say, I replied that I had made my choice, and *must* go.

"At least," said he, "let me get you a berth and your outfit;" and to this, after some debate, I consented. It so happened that there was no voyage that precisely suited me. There was, however, a Boston merchant then in the city, a friend of Mr. ——'s, who was one of the owners of the good ship C——, then bound to Valparaiso and a market. In reply to the inquiries of my friend M——, he said he had no doubt but that I could get a berth in her, and that if I chose I might bear him company, as he would leave the city in the afternoon. M—— wrung my hand, as I bade him good-by.

"Perhaps it's best, after all, Fred," said he. "Write to me, and be sure you so conduct yourself as to be able to write me a good account of what you have done.

Be away a year or so, and then come back ; study medicine, and marry Mary A—— in spite of them all!"

I attempted to say something in reply, but my emotions overpowered me, and with a choking sensation in my throat, which prevented all utterance, I pressed his hand in both of mine, and hurried away.

It was at daybreak on the second morning after I left Philadelphia that we arrived at Boston. The market-wagons, milk-carts, and bread-carts were beginning to rattle over the pavements as we entered the city. There were stirring, too, some few of those desperate early risers, martyr-like health-seekers, muffled to the chin, and looking fiercely out from the entrenchments of furs and flannels, in which their faces were defensively posted, upon the fog and the gray sky, as they strode around the Common.

By the advice of my companion, I went to the Mariner's House, where, by the by, I found, for the few days I was there, comfortable quarters, and the kindest of treatment. About a week after my arrival, I signed "the articles," as "a green hand" on board the C——, at eight dollars a month. "O what a fall was *there*" to my dreams of a fortune ! It was too late, however, to recede.

The next morning we hauled out in the stream, and the following day we got our anchor at daybreak, and made sail. The wind hauled to the eastward as we came up with Cape Cod. Bearing away, we ran through "The Swash of the Horseshoe," and stood on through the Vineyard Sound. At five in the afternoon, the land grew dim, and I breathed my silent adieu to my native land. The wind freshened, hauling a little to the northward ; and, as they say at sea, it began to get

rough. With several others I made my way, with an overpowering feeling of nausea and dizziness, to the lee scuppers, and paid the first bitter tribute to Old Neptune. I remember—faintly as if it were a dream—that I crawled wearily below into the dark, filthy, forecastle, and managed, *how* I know not, to stretch my limbs

“On my pallet of straw.”

It happened, for some reason, that I had not had an anchor watch while we were lying in port, and I had forgotten, if I had ever known, that a very material portion of a sailor’s work was to be done in the night. Judge, then, of my amazement—my utter consternation—when with three blows of a handspike upon the deck just above my head, and a voice which could have scarcely been more terrible to me had it been “the last trump,” the mate shouted

“All star-bowlines ahoy—y—y! Twelve o’clock, bullies! Tumble up here! D’ye hear?”

“Ay, ay!” growled some drowsy old salt; and, after some delay and no little hard swearing, a light was struck, and the watch turned out. Sick as I was—and I cared little whether I lived or died—I went on deck. “Olympian Jove!” exclaimed I, as I reached the scuttle. The darkness was as rayless as that of the land of Nile. I groped my way staggering, and occasionally falling headlong, to the weather-rail, and there, shivering under the bulwarks, wet with the spray, sick, exhausted, I remained during the long, cheerless four hours of my first night-watch at sea. I have since known something of hardships, have ridden out many a gale,

but never afterwards, in my recollection, was I so glad to hear the welcome words,

"Eight bells! call the watch!" and, a few minutes afterward,

"Go below, the watch!"

I will not tire you with the details of our outward passage. Suffice it to say that I was not long in getting my sea-legs on; that I took my tuck at the wheel the second day out, and that I learned "the ropes" sooner than any other green hand on board. We had a terrific storm off the mouth of the river La Plata, and some snow-squalls off the Cape; but, on the whole, we had a pleasant passage—one hundred and twenty days to Valparaiso.

One of our men-o'-war entered the harbor just ahead of us. I can give you little idea of the joy one feels, after a long passage, on seeing the stars and stripes in a foreign port. It tells you of HOME; and it wakes a host of thoughts and feelings that send your blood shivering along your arteries with ungovernable excitement. What, then, think you, were my feelings as the sloop ahead of us *came-to* just under the stern of the frigate S—, at whose peak our beautiful ensign was floating lazily in the breeze, and the frigate's band struck the notes of "The Star-Spangled Banner?" I wept like a school-boy, and was glad to be able to conceal my tears by leaning over the rail.

It was dark when we had got everything snug for the night. The moon rose over the crescent city; the lights glistened from the hillsides, and the songs of the fishermen came to our ears mingled with the mellow tones of the evening bells. I went below.

It chanced to be my anchor-watch from eleven to twelve. I was called at eleven, and had been on deck but a few minutes when I heard the sound of oars. The sound grew more distinct, and the long, slow, measured stroke assured me that it belonged to a man-o'-war. It hove in sight.

Suddenly the men lay upon their oars, and a strain of music, the softest, richest, as I then thought, I had ever heard,

“Nighest bordering on heaven,”

came over the motionless waters of the bay. The water was glistening like a silver sea ; its mirror-like surface being broken only by the cutter, as she glided silently under the stern of the S—. It was the band of the English frigate, with her officers. The officers of the S— came on deck, and her quarter-rail and taffrail were soon lined with glistening uniforms.

“Thank you! thank you!” shouted a manly voice among the American officers ; but it was unheard in the music of the band, and the boat glided away as noiselessly as she had come, the notes of one of the Ellsler dances sending a thrill of delicious pleasure to every vein.

We soon discharged the C—, and stood along the coast to several ports (Cognimbo and Arica among others), and in about three months had stowed her with copper (in pigs), hides, Nicaragua wood and wool, together with some tons of saltpetre, and returned to Valparaiso. Never shall I forget the morning that we got our anchor. It was at the dawn of day, and a light breeze was blowing off the land.

Tom Gomer, or the Doctor, as we familiarly called

him (always the cook's soubriquet at sea), went to the windlass with us, and began the heart-stirring air of

“ Time for us to go, my bullies !”

as we shipped the brakes of the windlass.

“ Time for us to go !”

was the roisterly chorus ; and the hot tears came in torrents over the stiff wrinkles of many a weather-beaten face, as we “ walked the anchor to the bows,” and whispered exultingly to each other “ *Homeward bound, HOMEWARD BOUND !* ” The words recall to me the delirious excitement of that calm, beautiful morning : the rippled waters of the bay ; the silent city ; the drum-beat on board the men-o'-war, succeeded by the hoarse call of the boatswain's mates, “ A-l-l hands !” the blue heights of the Andes in the distance, and the roar of the surf upon the rocks that lie at the entrance of the harbor. The mate called for the fall and the fish-davit, and the anchor came to the cat-head and upon the rail, to the air of “ Cheerily men !” as if it had been for its weight a nursery toy.

It was on a glorious morning in June that the watch below, myself among them, were startled by the loud cry of “ Light, O ! Sail, O !” in quick succession. We were among the mackerel-smacks ; and it was not long ere some one shouted from the foretopmast cross-trees, “ Land O !”

“ Where away ?” shouted the old man (nauticé, for the captain), as he came to a sudden halt on the poop-deck.

“ Right ahead, sir ! the Capes in plain sight !”

It fell calm, however, and it was late in the afternoon when we passed the sand-hills of Cape Cod. The breeze

then freshened ; and, when a few leagues from Boston Light, a pilot-boat darted like a dolphin under our lee and hailed us.

“ Want a pilot ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Lay your maintopsail to the mast, and I’ll board you.”

The wind again became “ baffling.” Night came on. Boston light beamed in its benignant beauty upon the sea, and at eleven o’clock we let go the anchor abreast of Spectacle Island. The live-long night did I pace the deck in a fever of excitement. The fragrance of the fields and orchards came off to us with the fresh air of the morning, and the day dawned in beauty. As the sun rose, we got under way, and at nine o’clock we were along side of Lewis’ wharf, sails unbent—the runners aboard, and the derrick up ready for discharging.

Without waiting to doff my sailor attire, I took the cars that evening for Fall River, where I got on board the “ Bay State,” and at sunrise next morning I was in New York. It had been my intention to go home dressed as a sailor, in order to give the doctor a surprise. I thought of Mary, however ; and, remaining two days in New York, I dressed with scrupulous care, and then set out for Washington.

It was already dark when I reached the city. There was the usual throng upon the avenue, as I walked rapidly along, valise in hand, towards home. When within a few steps of the door, I was very roughly jostled by some one going in the opposite direction, as much in a hurry, apparently, as myself.

“ Howly mother o’ Moses ! ” exclaimed a harsh feminine voice. “ Tin thousan’ pardons, sir ; but could ye inform me where’s Docther ———’s office ? ”

"Yes, I am going there."

"Well, thin, make haste honey, for the love of the Holy Vargin', for she's dyin'!"

"Who is dying?"

"Why, Mary A——, to be shure, that's sick since this day twelvemonth."

The office door was open. Throwing my valise into the hall, I motioned to a hackman.

"Drive me to Mrs. A——'s, on —— street. Quick! here's a dollar for you."

The coach thundered along the avenue, turned into —— street, and stopped. The door opened, the steps rattled, and I sprang upon the sidewalk. Without stopping to question the servant who answered my ring, I rushed past him up the stairs to the room where I had last seen Mary A——. In an instant, I was at the bedside. A smile lighted up the thin wasted features—

"A smile of the old sweetness—"

as she placed her hand in mine; a crimson flush overspread her cheek for an instant; then there was a faint pressure from the frail fingers that lay in mine; then a gasp—and Mary A—— was dead!

What followed I know not. When I recovered my reason, Dr. —— was by my bedside; and on a light-stand near him was a goodly array of cups and phials. A tear was glistening in his eye as he caught the glance of mine, and, clasping his hands as he looked upward, he exclaimed, in his low, earnest tones, "Thank God!"

"Not a word, my boy," he added; "not a word now. You'll be stronger, soon. Keep perfectly quiet, and you'll soon be well."

My recovery was slow. To banish as far as possible

the sad recollections that thronged upon me, the doctor brought me here. He could not remain; but I have friends here, among whom I am glad to reckon yourself, and am as happy as I can ever hope to be.

The night had waned into the “small hours” as the stranger finished his story. The dancing in the saloon had long been over; and the hotel, if I may except the monotonous twang of a guitar from a distant apartment, was quiet. With such expressions of sympathy and regard as I could command, I bade my friend good-night; and, wading through the sand to the sound shore, I was soon at home and in my chamber. In the few remaining hours of the night, I remember having a medley of dreams, in which, on land and sea, I too was a wanderer, loved and was loved again, and saw the clods of the valley that had closed over the grave of

“Hopes that were angels in their birth,
But perished young, like things of earth.”

When I next visited the hotel, the stranger was gone. Rumor whispered that a bright-eyed Virginia girl who did not often visit the hotel, but chanced one evening to leave the “*up guoines*” for the dancing saloon, had very manifestly been of service in dispelling his melancholy, and giving him wiser and more interesting views of life. Certain it is that her ring was seen glistening on his finger; that they left in the same packet; and that when Miss Helen —— got into her father’s coach at Elizabeth city, it needed no very urgent invitation to induce my young friend to accompany them to the old family mansion at Barleywood.

“O! there’s nothing half so sweet in life
As love’s young dream!”

CHAPTER IX.

OLD JACK.

AMONG the faces that I occasionally see of an evening, not the least welcome to me is that of OLD JACK. Mention the name to any one of the hundreds at NAG'S HEAD, and not one would mistake your meaning. I remember that while I was confined to my chamber by illness, I heard one day tones whose gruffness and growling monotony I was sure must belong to some "old salt;" for the characteristic is as easily detected by one who has been at sea as is the rolling gait or any other peculiarity which marks the genuine sailor.

He was giving to my friend W—— an account of the captain of the packet Fox. He had really nothing to say to his disadvantage, but, true to his marine instincts, he must of necessity "growl" about something.

"I don't know," said he (and he would need but a very trifling elevation of tone wherewithal to cry a lost child on Broadway), "as I is got much to say agin de man. He knows de ropes, for sure, an' I'll be boun' he didn't creep in at de cabin windows; but, somehow, I likes a man what knows *de twenty-fo' letters ob de alfybet!*!"

Jack had heard, from what source I know not, that his skipper was deficient in the somewhat common conveniences of a knowledge of reading and writing, and,

though faithful on board the vessel, he was never tired on shore of expressing his contempt for a skipper whose scientific attainments were so very limited.

Mr. W—— was fond of the rough, honest old sailor, possessing, as he did, more intelligence than his brethren, and evincing sterling qualities, that won for him not merely good treatment but hearty regard and respect. The old sailor was an oracle in all matters pertaining to the packets, the navigation of the sound, and the history of NAG'S HEAD from its earliest settlement.

It is known very generally that the coast of North Carolina, from Cape Hatteras northward as far as Kill-devil Hills, has been noted for a large number of wrecks. The light-house near the New Inlet is of comparatively recent construction. Before it was erected, scarcely a summer passed without one or more wrecks. There are some frightful tales yet current of wicked deeds on that low sandy coast, of lanterns tied to a horse's head, and of windows that looked seaward being illuminated at night; but no doubt many of them are entitled to no credit.

Certain it is, however, that vessel after vessel came ashore, and was pillaged of its freight whenever the articles of which it consisted were of such a character as to excite the cupidity of the bankers. The process by which it disappeared was somewhat mysterious.

"You couldn't see," said Old Jack, "anythin' comin' out; dough dey *did* say dat some people dat went aboard as thin as ghosts a'most come ashore lookin' like a Baltimore alderman or the sheriff in court-week. Dere was de brig Moon, ye know, massa John, an' I don't know how many more. Dey *do* say dat dere is some of her cargo 'bout Nag's Head now!"

The wrecks were a theme whose fertility was never exhausted. The gestures, the fun-loving wrinkles at the corners of his eyes, the comic mimicry with which old Jack illustrated his "yarns," made my friend W—— at all times a ready listener. He had won my attention, too, and, when I had recovered my health, I was always glad to hear him talk. It so happened, one evening, as I was standing under the branches of a noble oak, looking down upon the packets as they lay at anchor, the surface of the sound glistening in "the pale moonlight," and the thousand objects which the moon always clothes with beauty, giving additional interest to the scene, that old Jack passed near me. I hailed him.

"Jack."

"Sah! your sarvant, maussa!"

"They tell me, Jack, that you have seen a good many wrecks here at Nag's Head."

"Why yes, maussa, I'se been in dis part ob de country a great while."

"The crews generally escaped, didn't they, Jack?"

"Not al'ays! not al'ays, maussa. Dere was de Jo——, de Jo——; I disremembers the bloody name jis now; dere was right smart o' folks drownded when she come ashore."

"How was it, Jack?"

"Why, you see, maussa, dis was a good many years ago, and my memory aint so good no more as it used to be; but I'll tell you all about it, 'jis as fur as I can remember. You see it had been blowin' great guns from the east, an' for five or six days. Den it come on to rain—ye never see de like of it!"

"Such a storm as we had last week, Jack?"

"Bless your soul, maussa, dat wasn't a circumstance.

De chimneys come rattlin' down, the shingles blow off,
an' de tide—I t'ought my soul it 'u'd *never* stop risin'.
Well, dat night it blowed harder 'n ever. Jis afore sun-
down, dere was a brig hove in sight with her top-hamper
all carried away. De wind drove her strait in towards
de shore. Well, ye see, de bankers dey come down to
the beach to see her. De people" (the crew) "'peared
to be tryin' to get sail on her and claw off; but Lor'
bless you, maussa, it wan't no use. Den dere was some-
body—it was de cap'n, I s'pose—run up de main riggin'
and made signals, and tried to say somethin' wid de
speakin'-trumpet. He stayed a little toolong in de riggin',
for when de brig struck it knock him overboard, and it
was all day* wid him."

"But why didn't they lower a boat, Jack?"

"I been guoine to tell you. You see, it wan't no use
nohow to try to lower de boat. In de fus place, de
boat bin knocked off de davys and lost, and de long-
boat was too heavy to manage in a gale like dat. Lor'
love you, maussa! your heart would bin broke to see
dem poor creturs. Dey all went aft on de poop-deck
and tried to hang on to de rail. Dere was a lady' mong
'em. Some of 'em was washed overboard when de brig
struck, and it wa'n't long afore dey wa'n't one livin'
soul to be seen. Some on 'em tried to swim ashore, but
de under-tow, ye see, carry 'em back, an' it wan't no use.
Dere was ten of 'em dat we picked up de next mornin'.
De cor'ner sot on 'em, and dey was buried up dere by
Jockey's Ridge. I don't never want to see no more
such times as dem."

* "*All day with him,*" a common expression among sailors,
meaning "he was killed."

"Did the bankers get anything from *her*?"

"Yes, maussa, de beach was kivered wid de boxes, and barrels, an' I don't know what all."

"Were none of the bodies identified?"

"What you been guoine to say?"

"I mean, did no one come to claim any of the bodies?"

"No, maussa; yes dere was, too. Dere was one ole gemman from Nansemond—I disremember what his name was—a gray-haired ole man dat took on, an' cried a heap about de young lady; an' it 'pears to me dey carry de body away to Virginny."

To the vessel, Old Jack is literally wedded. On shore he is never contented, and for that matter, never even at sea; for your true old salt grumbles at the most favorable dispensations of Providence. Tell him "who kill'd the gauger" (as Curran expressed it), and he would *growl* if you couldn't also inform him "who wore his corduroys."

A laughable trait of Old Jack's (as of all old sailors) is his dogmatical tone in all nautical matters. Nothing about a vessel but he considers himself supreme authority as to its name and uses. No part of the world that he has not visited in person, or which some shipmate has not seen and told him all about it that is worth knowing! There was a discussion among the crew one day about latitude. Jack had a knot of listeners round him, and was detailing to some of his untraveled friends a few of the "Wonders of Nature and Providence."

"Ye see, dere is some places dat's mighty cole—cole enough to freeze de ears off of a brass monkey! and dere is oder places where you can toast a sea-biscuit jis by leavin' it on deck in de sun. In some of dem

dere high latitudes, *up in a hundred an' twenty, an' along dere.*"

"Why, Jack," interrupted the mate (a white man), "there aint so much latitude as that nohow; leastways, that *I* ever hearn tell on!"

"De h—l dere aint, Bill! *I'se bin guoine as high as 96° myself!*"

With all his faults, old Jack is a fine, manly specimen of a son of the sea. With his native shrewdness and good sense, education, and opportunity might have placed him in a higher and more congenial sphere. Will his benighted brethren never be one of the sisterhood of the nations that are free?

CHAPTER X.

SAND-FIDDLERS.

I AM, as James would say, or rather as he *has* said, "matutinal" in my habits. When one has lain for hours in the night, imparting a palsy-like animation (and I would here be understood to refer very particularly to the *shaking palsy*) to one's bed by the vigorous shiverings of a North Carolina ague, or "*chill*," there is no very great merit in your being matutinal in your habits. Apropos of the chills. I expressed to a Carolinian, when I first became a resident in the old North State, my surprise at the sallowness of complexion so common everywhere, and especially among the residents of the eastern counties.

"Bless your heart, my dear sir, it's nothing at all but the chills and fever! We're RAISED on it here! I'm rather partial to a chill, myself!"

I was speaking of the custom of early rising. It has not attained quite to the character of custom with me, here at Nag's Head; and for the fact that I rose at four this morning, I make no claim to the ordinary feeling of satisfaction which one is apt to feel in the exercise of such heroic self-denial. The truth is that I had been ill. I had lain, feverish and restless, for hours. Of them all, I alone was awake. C—— slept soundly, though ever and anon he would mutter some undistinguishable words, in his low, pleasant tones; and then all was still. I say *still*; for the monotonous breathing of the sleepers around me, and the measured *tick! tick!* *tick-ing* of the clock were but foils to make the silence more profound and more appreciable. Night—restlessness—solitude—and a chill! what wonder that I rose at four?

A cool breeze from the ocean greeted me as I stepped forth upon the sands, and I involuntarily directed my steps to the beach. Old Hector came bounding from his kennel, though he had discretion enough to stop a yard from me, with an inquiring look and a wag of his tail, which I construed into

"By your leave, I'll bear you company."

I was patting him on the head, when Jumper came wriggling along in a gait partaking the elegancies of both a rack and a gallop, and, with an inconsiderate rush at my nether man, very nearly upset me. I hope I may be forgiven. I had come forth in charity with all the world. I had felt grateful for the cool, fresh air of the sea, and the song of the birds, and the promise

of a beautiful day. I had been gratified, too, at the well-bred *retenue* of old Hector in his courtly way of bidding me good morning, and his canine tact in so quietly "passing the time o' day."

I repeat that I hope I may be forgiven. For, in a momentary uprising of wrath, I bestowed on poor Jumper, whose civilities around my legs were getting to be very decidedly pressing, a kick, in which I concentrated all the energy that the chills and the fever had so considerately left me. Jumper looked up at me with a puzzled and astonished expression that makes me laugh as I write; as if he had not quite made up his mind that he might reckon the civility I had just shown him as "*one of the customs of the country.*" Without enlightening him, however, as to the *lex loci*, I pursued my way to the beach.

The surf was breaking finely upon the shore; and, feeling somewhat fatigued, I seated myself on a partially decayed cedar stump, that I might rest as I surveyed the beauties of daybreak. The dogs left me, and, to say the truth, I was glad of it. I like company when I am traveling amidst fine scenery; but a sunrise is appreciated best when seen alone.

As I sat waiting for the advent of

"The all-beholding sun,"

my attention was arrested by a very different object; none other than a veritable SAND-FIDDLER—an animal of the genus crab, I take it, though I am no naturalist.

He was evidently "young and inexperienced;" for he halted at the very entrance of his hole, with *a few of his legs* over the edge of it, in readiness for instant and precipitate retreat. He stared at me as none

but the unsophisticated can stare, and I returned the civility. He had four legs on each side, between which his round crab-like body hung midway, in the manner of a suspension bridge, and two antennæ in front. His black piercing eyes, which he kept immovably fixed upon me, as if he suspected me of "takin' notes," were at the extremity of two shorter antennæ, and, so far as I could see, were capable of being moved in any direction. While I was surveying him, there came gradually forth from a score of holes as many of the many-legged inhabitants. My young friend, I found, was a sand-fiddler of little influence in the community. No notice was taken of him, except an occasional glance of reprobation for being the first to pop out of his hole in the very face of what was supposed to be the most imminent danger.

Anon, in the throng that seemed gathering for mutual conference *de salute republicæ*, came forth the old gray-beard inhabitants. With all the dignity of aldermen, they came forward in a direct way of progression. Among the younger members of the community, there was now and then a buckish or coquettish display of the fashionable elegancies of gait, "equal to a milliner," as Mr. Mickey Free would say.

There was, at first, a good deal of bustle. The sages conferred together, and some among them seemed satisfied that a crisis had come, or was about to come in the political and civil history of Fiddlerville. There was one lean hungry-looking fellow, a politician I was certain, who made himself conspicuous by running about, and sounding the views of the citizens. He seemed at last to have secured the attention of all. It is my deliberate belief that he was making a speech. If there had been

any resolutions drawn up, I was not cognizant of the fact ; but I felt sure that that lean-looking sand-fiddler was successfully persuading the majority of the citizens both of their danger and his own patriotism, to say nothing of their own indomitable prowess, which, as it had ever been sufficient to defend the garrison, would now, out of all question, be equal to the present alarming crisis.

The sun had risen, and it was the hour for breakfast. When I arose to depart, the whole assembly dispersed, my patriotic friend being the first in the inglorious retreat to the subterranean city. A delicious dish of coffee awaited me on my return. John, the baby, was making the house ring with his good-natured roar. My friend W—— was discussing a corned mullet, and C—— had already ordered his horses for a drive with some of the ladies.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PACKETS.

NAG'S HEAD would not long be known as a watering-place, or summer resort, but for the peculiar features which distinguish it from any other within my knowledge. One of these features is the fact that a very large proportion of the visitors are actual residents in private dwellings. True, there is a large hotel, and it is usually thronged from the first of July until the latter part of September. The majority of those who take

up their quarters at the hotel are unmarried. Planters, merchants, and professional men usually have a snug cottage at Nag's Head, to which they remove their families, with the plainer and more common articles of household furniture, one* or more horses, a cow, and such vehicles as are fitted for use on sandy roads; a buggy sometimes, but oftener a cart, resembling the convenient Canadian cart or the Nantucket "calash" (caleche). One, two, three, sometimes half a dozen servants accompany the family. Indeed, I know one gentleman who has some sixty negroes (children and invalids for the most part) living here, not far from his own residence. It costs but little, if any more, to keep them here than it would to leave them at home.

Now, to feed so many hungry mouths there must be a goodly supply of provisions. And, inasmuch as nothing can be cultivated here, the supplies must come from the plantation. As fresh vegetables are almost indispensable, it is of great importance, too, that the intercourse between NAG'S HEAD and *home* should be constant and regular.

It is this that sustains some three or four packets, which run usually twice a-week. One of these *plies* between ELIZABETH CITY and NAG'S HEAD. Another comes from HERTFORD; another from EDENTON, and another from SALMON RIVER, or MERRY HILL; the latter being owned and employed by a wealthy gentleman for the convenience of his family and friends.

None of these packets, I believe, run less than sixty miles. They are chartered, if I am rightly informed, by a number of families; and for a stipulated sum carry them back and forth, and convey horses, furniture, provisions, and other freight during "the season."

It will readily be seen that the constant intercourse thus maintained, in a shallow sound (for the Albemarle has but a few fathoms of water) cannot be without danger. True, "the season" is the part of the year least hazardous to sailors ; but there occurs sometimes, in mid-summer even, a violent storm. This, in a stanch vessel, in the open sea, were a matter of small moment ; but with shoals on every hand, the coast scantily lighted, and with the decks cumbered by horses, carts, and furniture, a storm may be a thing to be dreaded even in Albemarle Sound.

I was roused from my slumbers this morning by the shouts of the children, oddly contrasting with the gruff bass of old Jack, who had come for a chat with "Maussa John."

"The packet's come ! mother ! the packet's come !" shouted V—— and S——. "Packet's come !" echoed little S—— ; and John the baby (a brave little fellow he is, too) roared, in an ecstasy of excitement, "Oo—oo—oo !" A promiscuous tumble upon the stairs was then heard, and up came T—— and F—— to swell the chorus.

In a few minutes, the boat was loosed from her moorings, the sail set, and J—— was on his way to the packet. She lay quietly, riding at single anchor, and gave an air of companionship and life to a scene which else had little to rob it of its accustomed expression of barrenness and solitude. It was not long before J—— had returned, and the tumult recommenced.

"Here's a letter for you, papa ! And there's one for *you*, Mr. Seaworthy !" "Two for *you*, sister J—— !" "Here's some tomatoes ! and a bag of apples—and here's

a box of clothes for you, T——!” Such were some of the expressions that were audible in the momentary din.

“What kind of a passage did you have?” said Mr. W—— to old Jack.

“Why, tol’ble, Maussa John, thank ye; on’y tol’ble. Right smart chance of wind off Alligator* last night. Dark as burgoo. Den we had thunder and lightnin’, and de rain—dey aint been no more sich sence de Flood. Ob course, you’ve read all ‘bout dat, Maussa John.”

“Any damage, Jack?”

“No, maussa; leastways, none to speak of. Dere was one young lady’s bonnet carried away, and clumsy ole Pete, plague take de fellas! trod on one of de ban’-boxes and spilt anoder. But de top-hamper and de groun’-takle’s all right, and as long as dem is where dey b’longs, I don’t care for de small damages. De Fox has got a new foresail and jib, and dem aint ben guoin to fetch away nohow.”

Such were my notes of the packets. I have other, and widely different associations which will long cause me to think of them with interest. It was on board the little —— packet that I left a home which a very short residence had made dear to me. My fellow-passengers were personal friends, and the ordinary and trivial incidents of a passage, under such circumstances, are *events* which we remember with pleasure.

It was in the packets, too, that I had seen, one after another, well-nigh all the familiar faces deserting their summer residences for the quiet and other comforts of

* The mouth of the Alligator River.

home. Some I had watched, as they departed, with the sad thought that it was scarcely probable that I should ever meet them again. One of the gloomiest of all the days I spent at Nag's Head was that on which some half a score of my personal friends bade us good by. On the preceding evening, C—— and myself ventured upon the singing of the following

SERENADE.

I.

The parting hour is almost nigh,
The night is on the wane,
And weary days shall pass away
Ere we shall meet again.

II.

“ The old familiar faces”
Of friends we hold most dear,
Will haunt us in our lonely hours
For many a coming year.

III.

Farewell! and Heaven’s blessings,
Like Heaven’s dews, descend
On you and yours, while happily
Life’s journey ye shall wend.

IV.

A land there is where parting hours
Our hearts shall fear no more;
And friends, long gone before us there,
Shall meet us on the shore.

We sang the stanzas to the air of “ Lucy Neal.” For the words, they are of little interest or merit, excepting that which was lent them by the occasion. They may possibly meet the eye of some to whom they will

bring a forgotten, perhaps a *pleasant*, incident of a visit at Nag's Head.

"Going off to the packet, Mr. Seaworthy?" said C——, the next morning, at the breakfast-table.

"Thank you, C——; I believe I am scarcely able to do so."

"You'd better go. BILL, put the saddle on old SCIP. Shall I have a horse saddled for *you*, Mr. Seaworthy?"

"I thank you, no."

The breakfast was scantily honored. Away galloped C——; away went the doctor, and I was left alone. I crawled rather than walked to the nearest sand-hill, and looked down upon the sound. There lay the beautiful packet, well-nigh ready for her departure. Boats were running busily to and fro. There was a little knot of gentlemen at the wharf; and I thought I could see now and then the flutter of a white dress among them, which went far to explain their patient tarrying on the shore.

I leaned against the stake of a half-buried fence, and gazed until the packet got her anchor. As I have seen an albatross lift his white wings in the snow and sleet of Cape Horn, so quietly and gracefully did the little packet spread her snow-white canvass for her departure. She turned her head coquettishly away from the amorous breeze that came jauntily and with lover-like impetuosity from the sun-lighted sea, and glided away as noiselessly as did ever fairy from her hare-bell palace. Right valiantly did I essay a cheerful smile as I entered the house.

"They are gone!" said I, as I made the effort; but the familiar faces and tones, and remembered looks,

and words, and songs, came “crowding thickly up;” my lip *would* quiver, and I sought the stillness and solitude of my little chamber, and stifled, in grim sternness, the up-thronging recollections. There was a long *entry* in my journal that day, my dear reader, and—and—but, pardon me! you are not my father confessor; nor did I by any means “make a clean breast of it” to my journal.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WRECK.

“ O, MR. SEAWORTHY, there’s a vessel ashore.”
“ Where?”

“ Just beyond Jockey’s Ridge, about six miles, they say; came ashore last night. She’s got all sorts o’ good things aboard; and Mr. —— and Mr. ——, and Col. ——, and I don’t know how many more, have gone up to see her.”

“ Any *lives* lost?”

“ No, they all got safe ashore; and I b’lieve the cap’n’s at the hotel *now*.”

Such was a little dialogue between a charming little girl and myself, as I seated myself, this evening, at supper. The conversation naturally turned upon wrecks. Divers tales were told of “hair-breadth ‘scapes” from the perils of the sea. We sat long at the table. The conversation was of especial interest to the little folk, and

I was somewhat suddenly startled by one of them, who said to me,

"O, Mr. Seaworthy, you've been to sea. Why can't you tell us a story?"

"Well, S——, a story you shall have. Would you just as lief I would give you a story told me by an old shipmate of mine?"

"No; *indeed* I wouldn't!"

"Well, then, one of my own, if you so prefer it; and, to give it the first name I think of, I will call it

THE GRAVES; OR, A WEEK IN THE ICE."

"The graves! What in the world have *graves* to do with a sea-story?"

"If you will examine the chart of Massachusetts Bay, you will see, at no great distance from Boston Light, a very dangerous reef."

"Such a reef as they take when it blows too hard, Mr. Seaworthy?" asked one of the youngsters.

"No, my dear; but a very dangerous reef of *rocks*, on which many a brave vessel has been wrecked."

"Were *you* wrecked, Mr. Seaworthy?"

"That is just what I am going to tell you about. And you mustn't interrupt me so, or I shall never be able to tell you at all. Now don't pout about it."

In the winter of 184—, I had occasion to go from New York to Frankfort, in Maine. I dreaded, as I always do, so long a journey in the cars; and I am free to confess that I did not quite relish the idea of a February voyage between the two ports. And yet I had a sailor's curiosity to see something of the New England

coast in winter. I had heard a thousand and one stories about getting "iced-up," and being obliged to run off into the Gulf* to thaw out the running rigging. I had heard, too, how vessels which had done so, and got back in sight of Boston Light, had been caught by "a nor'-wester, right in the teeth," and been forced to repeat the experiment. I had no doubt of the truth of the account; but, for one reason or other, I had a desire to see for myself. I had been four times off Cape Horn, and had heard old seamen say that the Cape was not half so much to be dreaded as the Yankee coast in midwinter.

A brisk walk to Whitehall, and among the piers, enabled me to secure a passage in the good schooner JANE, which, the advertisement said, would "have dispatch." The captain, a slightly-formed but resolute young man, at first objected to taking a passenger.

"The fact is, you see," said he, "it is colder'n Kam-schatka, a d——n sight. My crew is made up of Maine boys who know their places, and I ain't a goin' to make 'em live for'ard such weather as this. We all live aft, and if you go, you'll have to *rough it out* as we do."

I expressed my readiness to accept the plainest accommodations, observing that I had been at sea, and was not likely to be taken by surprise in regard to the accommodations. At an early hour the next morning, I had my baggage on board. It was decided that we could not get away that day. Dressing, therefore, in the most venerable suit I could find, I went on deck, and spent the greater part of the day in helping Mr. Mastcoat, the mate, and the crew, in getting the vessel .

* The common appellation given by sailors to the Gulf Stream.

ready for sea. There was the jib-boom to rig out, a sail or two to bend, and divers other little jobs that occupied the entire day. Meanwhile, the captain had "cleared" at the custom-house, and about eight o'clock the next morning we were under way with the pilot on board.

We had everything set, except *stu'n'sails*; and we were soon through Hell-Gate, bounding along with a smacking breeze a full point abaft the beam. The pilot left us, and the wind partially died away. As the day waned, however, it freshened again from the north-west, and the weather grew bitterly cold. During the day, rather than stay below I remained on deck, and stood for an hour or two at the wheel. Feeling somewhat fatigued, I went below a little after nightfall, and turned in for the night, saying to Captain Carline, as I did so,

"If I can be of service to you, give me a call."

"Thank you," was the reply, and in a few minutes I was in the land of dreams. I slept long and soundly. It was, perhaps, three o'clock the next morning that Amos came to me, and said, in his low, musical tones,

"Mr. Seaworthy, if you please, you may give us a lift. It's blowing hard, and we want to get some of the canvass off her. Captain says that if you'll take the wheel, he'll go aloft with us and get another reef in the topsail."

I dressed hastily and went on deck. Before us, in plain sight, were the white cliffs of Gay Head. The moon was at the full—not a cloud to be seen—and the night was bitterly cold. A palsy-like shiver came over me as I took the wheel.

"Keep her as she goes, if you please," said Captain Carline, as he gave me the wheel.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied I, mechanically; and I saw him spring lightly into the rigging. A moment more and I heard his clear, hearty, ringing voice as he shouted,

"Haul out to leeward!"

My berth at the wheel was no sinecure. The topsail-yard was on the cap, and the yard braced sharp to the wind, which had hauled aft so far that the schooner *yawed* fearfully in spite of my best efforts. By watching her closely, however, I managed to acquit myself creditably. Our fore and aft sails were now lowered, reefed, and set again, and the *Jane* "behaved better."

We were soon under the lee of Naushon and in smooth water. There was a little fleet of small craft in Tarpaulin Cove, which had been more fortunate than we in making a snug harbor. It was but a short time, however, before we reached Holmes' Hole. We anchored just at daybreak, having made the passage from New York in about twenty hours.

The wind grew more moderate towards noon, and the bumboats came off to us with pies and milk. Mr. Mast-coat, the mate, offered to take his "'fi-davy'" that the pies were mince-pies; and that, if they *were* of that description, he, for one, was not enough of a Society Islander to relish *dog*, "howsomever hashed up." After such a remark, no one was disposed to buy either pies or milk, and the poor bumboat-men sought a market in another part of the little fleet around us.

The weather continued to improve, and we got under way with a light, westerly breeze, heading for Cape Cod. At noon, it fell calm; but before we were fairly up with the Cape, we were most unexpectedly, and

certainly very unwelcomely, greeted with a cold, raw, searching north-easter. As a north-east wind on the New England coast is, in the winter months, usually accompanied with snow, Captain Carline did not think it prudent to remain outside, and decided to run into some harbor. Mr. Mastcoat suggested Provincetown.

"Have you ever been into that harbor, Mr. Mastcoat?" said the captain.

"Yes, indeed, sir; four or five times."

"Can you pilot the Jane in there?"

"Yes, sir; I think I *kin*, if anybody *kin*."

"Put her away, then."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"So! steady as you go!"

"Steady as you go, sir!"

It was night, and the lights were blazing before we had reached even the roadstead or outer harbor. Mr. Mastcoat's memory was at fault. The lights confused him, and he was reluctantly obliged to confess that he "*didn't 'zactly know which was which!*" As the captain had depended on him as a pilot, he was very naturally angry.

"Wal," said he, "I can find the way into the bloody harbor, if *you can't!* When I go into port, I al'ays notice things so as I can go in there ag'in. I've got a chart of the hole, thank fortin'; and *I could take the Jane to h—ll if I had a chart on't!*"

We were happy to find ourselves, about ten o'clock, safely anchored in the harbor at Provincetown.

"How's the wind?" asked Captain Carline, as he lay in his berth the next morning.

"'Bout nothe-east, sir," replied the mate, who had just been on deck.

"No gittin' away from Provincetown to-day, then,
unless we run into Boston. Blowin' any this mornin'?"

"Blows fresh, sir."

It was on Monday night that we anchored. Tuesday passed, and Wednesday came, and the wind was still from the north-east. I can, even now, recall the scene of that morning on board the schooner. Captain Carline was sitting in the door-way of his state-room reading. Mr. Mastcoat sat on the transom; the cabin-boy JIM was sweeping the ashes from the stove-hearth, puffing like a porpoise withal. Ben and Amos had been on deck making an oak snatch for the ring-stopper, and came below with the comfortable assurance that there was no change in the weather, and that there was no hope of anything better until the change of the moon.

Time wore slowly away. We went ashore, and roamed about the *street* (for the town has but *one* worth the name) of Provincetown, amusing ourselves with the frolics of the children and the curiosities of the show windows. For myself, I remember debating, as I saw a bevy of young ladies pass, with cheeks and eyes whose freshness and brilliancy I have by no means yet forgotten, the expediency of becoming a resident of the Cape. There was a *field* for me to win immortal fame. Couldn't I discover some process of fertilizing the sand-hills? If I could, wouldn't it make my fortune? And, with a fortune, and a veil and hood (with their proprietress, such a one as I had there seen), what else could the world give me? Could I not write, as wrote GIL BLAS, over the door of my cottage,

"*Spes, et Fortuna! valete!*
Sat me lusistis; nunc ludite alios?"

Thursday passed without any change in the weather; but on Friday morning we got our anchor at the dawn of day. The day was clear and sunny; but there was a frosty rawness and chilliness in the air that made it necessary for us to "bundle up," and to thump our hands and feet to keep them above the freezing point. The wind, contrary to our expectations, was light and baffling, and at two o'clock Race Point was not far off on our lee quarter.

I retreated from the deck, and, on going below, amused myself by taking a general survey of the little cabin. Captain Carline was lounging on the transom. Amos was fortifying himself with an extra jacket. The rudder was creaking on its pintles, and thumping monotonously against the casing. The sunlight flashed up from the ripples in our wake, as the schooner pitched lazily on the low swell. The little cylinder stove was red with the blazing coal, and we bade defiance to the cold. The wood work of the cabin was of brownish red, with paneling in imitation of maple. A little table stood against the bulkhead, with a reddish cover that would have been all the better for the humane offices of the laundress. Underneath it was a trunk, and over it, on a nail, hung a depopulated castor; the pepper and vinegar alone surviving of all the family circle. Near it hung the captain's watch. On the transom, fastened to the rudder casing, was a looking-glass which gave me a villainous presentiment that I can never forgive to my dying day. In front of it lay a pack of cards. Around it were a spare compass, a Bible, the *Kedge-Anchor*, the *American First Class-Book*, Blunt's *Coast Pilot*, and the *Cruise of the Midge*; and between the carlines, on a marline netting, hung divers charts.

Towards night the wind hauled to the north, and the weather grew bitterly cold. No exertions on deck were sufficient to keep up a comfortable temperature ; and, having been there nearly all day, I went below and turned in, saying to the captain, however, that he might call me at any time when he might need my assistance.

About midnight, Amos came to my little state-room, and, in his mild, musical tones, awoke me at a single call. I had not slept an hour, and very much preferred remaining in my berth ; but remembering what I had said to the captain, I turned out, dressed as hastily as possible, and went on deck. We were off Boston Light, and not a great way from “The Graves !”

“Bless me ! what a dismal name for a reef !” exclaimed S——.

I looked aloft as I stepped from the companion-way. The fore-topgallant sail hung in the brails, and the main-topmast staysail was flapping in the cross-trees, with a noise that made me very decidedly desirous to see it snugly stowed. The schooner was plunging and pitching heavily under a press of canvass, and the cold—ugh ! it makes me shudder *now* to think of it. To fill our cup of discomforts, the snow came driving in our faces. Captain Carline begged me to take the wheel while the people were taking in sail ; and, although I was there but a few minutes, my hands and feet were aching with cold when he came back and relieved me.

We had got, as we supposed, the weather-gage of “The Graves,” and the captain bore away gradually for Long Island Light. Not quite satisfied, however, in this regard, and not caring to make any very intimate acquaintance with such a reef and on such a night, he hauled by the wind and stood on until both

he and the mate were satisfied that they might safely bear away for Long Island Light. He did so. He was at the wheel; and, to shelter myself from the piercing wind, I went into the waist and leaned against the weather-rail.

"Keep a bright look-out ahead, Mr. Mastcoat," said Captain Carline.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Look out there in the waist, too. D'ye see anything of the reef, Ben?"

"Yes sir; think I do; showin' his teeth a little ways under our lee, sir!"

It was even so. But a few rods from the schooner the waves were breaking over the low rocks, the white foam looking, in the darkness, like the teeth of some snarling cur, dying to vent his spleen on some object which might *feel* his fangs.

"Keep a bright look-out, all hands!" shouted the captain.

I turned from the prospect under the lee, and looked over the weather-rail. Merciful Heaven! There, not three fathoms from the schooner, in the midst of the foam, was a jagged mass of rocks. They formed an outer spur of the main reef, and we were passing through a narrow channel where we would have little cared to be in the day-time, and in the best of weather. I was about to apprize Captain Carline of our danger, when Ben caught my arm, and said, in a whisper,

"Don't say a word! The danger's past. We're in good water now."

"Are you *sure* of it?"

"Sure of it? Yes; I've been through here before."

"Luff a little, sir ! there's a schooner right ahead of us," said the mate.

The vessel was but a little way ahead of us, and, as we were keeping away more than she, we were soon abreast of her. A change in our course again brought us in her wake, and we were dashing along at a furious rate, when her captain shouted,

"Hard down ! HARD DOWN with your helm ! Quick ! or you'll be afoul of us ! There's ICE ahead!"

We almost grazed her davits as we passed her. A low, though harsh, rumbling, grating sound now greeted our ears; our headway was very sensibly diminished, and in ten minutes we were stationary in the ice, midway in the channel, and just abreast of Long Island Light. As I had slept a little, and the captain and crew had been on deck since nightfall, I offered to remain on deck until daybreak. The wind freshened until about four o'clock, when I called the steward, and with his assistance stowed the jib, lowered the mainsail, settled the topsail on the cap, and hauled out the reef-tackles. Thus passed our first night in the ice. We scarcely changed our position during the night. When day dawned, we discovered several vessels in the same unenviable quarters as ourselves. Quite near us was the schooner we were so near running afoul of a few hours before, and an English brig.

During the day we drifted a little with the ice, and in the following night, which happened to be Saturday night, we succeeded in getting the Jane out of the channel into a bay on the north side of Long Island.

It was not until the next Thursday that we escaped. We had, meantime, been as miserable as it then seemed possible for us to be. Ben and I had gone ashore on

the ice. We had dug clams and made a chowder. We had lowered the boat and tried to *break* out of the ice. All in vain, until about midnight on Wednesday night, the ice left us free. In the morning we made sail, and ran up near the city; and there we had the pleasure of waiting a week for a change of wind. Indeed, it *was* a pleasure, for Captain Carline went with me to see Warren and Smith in "Old Job and Jacob Gray;" and Mrs. Barrett as "Julia," and Miss Gann as Helen, in "THE HUNCHBACK."

"But didn't you go Frankfort, after all?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, tell us the rest, won't you?"

"Some other evening. Meanwhile, sing me 'The Land of the West,' and I'll bid you good night."

We sang it in chorus; and I awoke, a little past midnight, in an attempt to sing

"Then come there with me, 'tis the land I love best,
'Tis the home of my sires, 'tis my own darling West."



CHAPTER XIII.

NAG'S HEAD—AS IT WAS AND IS.

"Those good old days!
All days, when *old* are good,"

says Byron; and if I may credit half of what I hear of Nag's Head in the olden time, there must, indeed, have been happy hearts and homes there. It was all a forest

then. There were but three families who had built summer residences there, and were accustomed to remove there with their families. The headland then bore some resemblance, in the sea-approach, to the head of a horse, and hence its name. The days were spent in hunting, fishing, riding, and other amusements. The three families were as one in the interchange of kind-offices.

This primitive character, and absence of the restraints of fashionable life, together with the zest of novelty, wore gradually away. Dwellings sprang up, as suddenly, almost, as palaces in the Arabian Nights. It was asserted that he who cared to escape the accustomed attack of “the bilious” had but to go to Nag’s Head, and that with a supply of Parr’s pills one might there survive his wish to live.

The resort was soon thronged. A hotel was built, and a chapel. Roads were cut through the woods, and among what the bankers call “the up-guoines” (sand-hills). The song and the dance; the fox-hunt, the bowling-alley, and the delicious fish were powerful recommendations, and Nag’s Head became but another name for happiness. Lovers walked on the sea-shore. Doctors practiced without fees. It was respectable to be seen in homespun.

“It aint as’t used to be, *nohow!*” said old Jack to me one day, when we had been conversing a long while together. “Mebee it’s because I’m gittin along in years that things seem so much altered like. That’s it partly, I *do* s’pose. But den, ye see, massa, dey use to go ebery evenin’ to the beach—eb’rybody. Now dey does nuffin but dance at White’s. Den de most respec’blest people”—Jack loved a large word—“used to wear

the oldest and worsest clothes dey had. Now dey is gittin as fashionable as dey is in Baltimore."

I afterward visited the place where the original settlement was made. For acres around, there was not a single shrub or spire of grass. The three hills on which the dwellings stood were strewn with bricks, half covered with the mortar, which had become as hard as themselves. Among them were some fragments of bottles, and divers piles of oyster-shells, among which Jonathan Oldbuck might have discovered more antiquities than in his fertile Kaim of Kinprunes ; and which, I confess, were somewhat suggestive of scenes of sharp appetites, ruddy cheeks, and good fare. All around me had been a beautiful forest ; and lo ! in its place I beheld some scores of the tops, merely of huge oaks, and cedars which had yielded to the little grains of sand, whose coquettish frolics with the winds they had complacently looked down upon, or whose *gadding* propensities, as manifested in wandering from sea to sound, they had gravely and sternly rebuked.

As I sat on the fragment of a decayed door-sill, my friend Dr. C—— approached.

" You were one of the original settlers here, I believe, doctor."

" No, sir. My *father* is better entitled to that title, if it may properly be conferred on anybody who spends two months on a sand-hill !"

" What's in the wind, doctor ? You don't seem to be particularly pleased with Nag's Head."

" How *should* I ? I have almost broken my neck today in a fox-hunt. I lamed my best horse at the same time in the quicksands. I went to the Fresh Ponds on a pic-nic the day before yesterday, and on that inte-

resting occasion I tore a lady's dress in extricating my fish-hook from it (for you must know, fishing is a *sine qua non* in a pic-nic at the Fresh Ponds), stuck another in her finger in getting a perch off her hook ; and, as a grand finale, I fell into the pond. Don't laugh at me ! Dam—that is to say, it was a melancholy disaster, Mr. Seaworthy."

" Very," said I, gravely.

" The next day I went on a fishing excursion, almost to the inlet. We forgot to carry water, and it was as hot as—as hot as blazes. We expected to return to dinner, and we took no provisions. We had a thunder-squall just at night, and we were obliged to row and pole the old tub of a boat four miles, geographic or Irish measure, in such a rain as, I'll make affirmation, has never been since that remarkably long rain I used to read about in the Bible."

" The deluge ?"

" Yes."

" I hope you read that best of books *still*, doctor."

" Yes, sir, but not *here*. I defy *any* man to do it. I'm in a tearing passion from the time I come here till I go away. I hate the wind, eternally blowing off my hat—might wear a cap, I s'pose, but I hate a cap. I hate the good-for-nothing servants, who need an hour to black your boots, and who always obey the last order. There's our Tom, now. I sent him the other day to White's for a package. My father saw him on the way, and without knowing the boy's errand—for the dolt would never *tell* him, if he lived to the age of the patriarchs—sent him for some soft crabs. As fortune would have it, my sister was coming home from an excursion to the Fresh Ponds, and sent him *there* to bring

home her fan which she had left in a tree, under which we had eaten our dinner. And he went after the fan ! I hate the traveling in the sand, in which you sink to the ankles. I hate the naked glaring hills. In fact, I don't like the State."

"I thought *everybody* liked the old North State. Don't you remember the song we heard at Madame —'s the other evening ?

Oh, her sons are brave, her daughters fair,
 The old North State ;
 And dust of heroes slumbers there,
 The old North State !
 The birds that sing, the flowers of spring,
 Or June, or Autumn late—
 Oh! there's ne'er a land so dear to me,
 The old North State.

II.

Though the lands of other climes be fair,
 The old North State
 Hath scenes as beautiful and rare,
 The old North State.
 'Tis there the exile, doomed to roam,
 Forgets the wanderer's fate
 Within a Carolina *home*,
 The old North State !

III.

Then peace within her borders be,
 The old North State ;
 With freedom and prosperity,
 The old North State.
 And if, in coming years, we're doomed
 To part, or soon or late,
 I'll treasure in my heart of hearts
 The old North State."

“ All very well in its way, Mr. Seaworthy ; and Miss — sung it admirably ; though the air of ‘ *Love’s Young Dream* ’ is one I don’t particularly admire, and the words themselves are only so so. All the songs in the world wouldn’t make me like the State.”

“ You’re a native ?”

“ Not I ! and I’m glad of it. I have tried to like it, but it’s out of the question. I don’t like the east winds that blow with the constancy and regularity of the trades. I don’t like ‘ the bilious,’ which drags a man to death’s door every summer, unless he suffers martyrdom and fresh fish down here. I don’t like the detestable chills on which they raise their children, and which steal on you so slyly that you’re an hour in coming to the doleful conclusion that you have got it. And I might add what I heard old Jimmy Dyer say yesterday, ‘ *the State contains an awful quantity of poor sperits !* ’ ”

“ You say you are not a native ?”

“ Yes. We are from Maryland—some years ago, however ; and from one of the most beautiful nooks within its borders—one of those beautiful valleys that seem to nestle so affectionately to the side of the Catoctin Ridge.”

“ Why not return there ?”

“ *Why*, indeed ! thereby hangs a tale.”

“ Enlighten me.”

“ With pleasure. But suppose we walk to the old oak yonder, with the vine over it, and seat ourselves in the shade.”

A walk of a furlong brought us to the spot.

“ We came to North Carolina in ‘ 41 ; the year after Harrison’s campaign, you remember. Until that time, living, as I did, so far from this State, and having

nothing to call my attention particularly to it, I knew almost nothing about it. I had heard my Virginia friends tell some rather amusing stories about it. I had read in the geography that the country, for more than sixty miles from the coast, was a low, sandy plain, full of swamps; and that the dry districts among them were covered with pine forests, which produced tar, pitch, and turpentine, rosin and lumber, in great abundance. I had also an indistinct idea of a very high mountain in the western part, and had read, occasionally, the newspaper accounts of the gold mines. This, with some little recollection of the history of the State, as written, and ably too, by Williamson, was all I knew of the land which has become my home.

“When I left Pleasant Valley for my college-course at Cambridge, at the age of seventeen, I left one of the loveliest, most bewitching, most——”

“So there was a *lady* in the case?”

“Of course there was; for I’d be obliged to you, Mr. Bachelor Seaworthy, if you would be so good as to tell me in which and how many of the *cases* that make up our ephemeral existence there *isn’t* a lady!” replied the doctor, with considerable emphasis. “I was about to say that, dear to me as was every rock of the hills and every clod of the valley, as my *home*, it was a thousand fold dearer to me as the home of Kent Robinson. She was—but come and take tea with me to-morrow. You would not believe me if I were to tell you what she *was*, without having seen her as she *is*. And let me, by way of parenthesis, here protest against your unsocial habits; for our domicil has not been honored with your presence.

“I spare you a thousand details of the years that I

spent at Cambridge. My vacations were spent at home, and with her. We galloped the country over; now to Harper's Ferry; then to surrounding hills; then across the ridges towards Shepherdstown, following the windings of our own beautiful Potomac on our way homeward.

“ Will you believe it? Though she had been my playmate from early youth, I had never the courage to utter what was ever hovering at my lips.

‘ Day succeeded day,
Each fraught with the same innocent delights,
Without one shock to ruffle the disguise’

of brotherly regard. When, at the close of my academic career, I returned to the Valley for a two months' respite, I had still left my thoughts and purposes, my absorbing love for her, unspoken. My profession I had already chosen; and at the close of my holidays I had already made arrangements with Dr. —, of Baltimore, to enter his office as a student. The weeks flew by like a dream, and, ere I was aware of it, the last week of my visit was on the wane. I remember, as if it were yesterday, the few days that remained. It was Thursday of that week that we varied the course of our customary gallop (for we scarcely ever rode in any other way) and rode up the valley.

“ November was half gone, and the Indian summer had clothed hill and valley in a sombre beauty that I loved better than the gorgeousness of June. Never had I seen the forests so beautifully arrayed in their many-colored drapery. The stillness, the leaf-strown pathways, the curling smoke from distant chimneys, the ‘golden haziness’ of the atmosphere—all were *full* of beauty, and, with Kent by my side, you have no need

of special revelation to assure you that I was *happy*. Was it *thus* that Willis expressed it—

‘O God, I have enough!’

I am sorry I've forgotten it, for it's a gem. Such was my own feeling for a moment; but the next instant changed the current. Did she love *me*? A score of times was the avowal on my lips, when a question, or a laugh, or some object by the wayside arrested it; and when we reached home the words were not yet uttered.

“At the foot of the mountain, but half a mile distant from the house, was a spring that bubbled from beneath a huge rock, and which we were accustomed to call Rock Spring. To this, as the shadows were lengthening, we took our almost customary walk. Saddened by the thought of my approaching departure, I was taciturn and abstracted, and was more than once laughed at for my ludicrous replies. We reached the spring. A tall maple, whose garniture of leaves the frost had changed to a robe of crimson, stood like a sentinel at the foot of the rock. Near it were the beech, the birch, the hickory, and, here and there, a pine. The waters of the spring, clear as the heavens, mirrored the hues above it. The sun was no longer visible to us; but his sober smile still played on hill, and wood, and field on the opposite side of the valley.

“It was one of the ties that bound me to Kent, that she sung with the nicer expressions of thought, humor, and feeling, as they occur in a song, and without which a song is but a grim skeleton instead of the living, beautiful, soul-animated masterpiece of art which it is in the hands of your true singer. She pointed to the dis-

tant hills tipped with golden light, and sung, as she did so, the beautiful song of LOVER'S.

'O come to the West, love, O, come there with me,
'Tis the sweet land of verdure that springs from the sea,'

and I accompanied her with the bass. The song ceased.

"'The old day-wearied sun' had gone 'to his home in the West,' and we were yet standing on the rock. Kent stood looking thoughtfully on the gorgeous sky far away in the south-west, and a low sigh reached my ear as she replaced the light bonnet which had been lying on the rock at her feet.

"'Time for us to go home, Paul,' said she, hastily ; "but I must have a score of those beautiful leaves to carry home with me ;' and, reaching out her hand suddenly, she lost her balance. Quick as the lightning, I grasped her arm.

"'Thank God, dear Kent, you are safe !' The death-like paleness that overspread her features, and the slight stagger as she regained her footing might have excused an older head than mine for encircling her waist with my arm. The rubicon was passed. A few low, trembling words told the long-treasured secret. The little bonnet somehow, as bonnets will, fell back ; and when Kent's eyes next met mine, there was in them a light and a smile that, by a sort of free-masonry, emboldened me to imprint upon her lips a kiss that thrills my pulses even now.

"At midnight on the following Sabbath, I had said my last good night. I retired to my chamber for two or three hours, but not to sleep. To the full was I happy. It was not yet four o'clock, when I stepped into the carriage, with old Sam the coachman on the

boot, and in five minutes more I was on the road. I caught the gleam of light from the windows as we ascended a small hill; but it was only for a moment, and the wood which we were entering shut it wholly from view.

"I arrived safely at Baltimore, and entered upon my studies. What with correspondence and occasional visits, the three years passed happily away. I took my degree with credit, and was delighted to receive an invitation from my father to accompany him on a trip to the North. Kent, he said, would go with him, and he was pleased to add that he supposed I would not object to the arrangement.

"We were soon on our way. It was early in September. The season was well-nigh over; but never have I since that time, enjoyed half the pleasure that I then experienced, as we ascended the Hudson, lingered at Saratoga and Lake George, and glided along the romantic Champlain. From Burlington we traveled by easy stages through the beautiful villages of Vermont and New Hampshire to the White Mountains; and after remaining a week at Crawford's, journeyed on to Portland. It was agreed that we should stop a day or two at Salem, a relative of my father's being then a resident there. We did so, and were most cordially received; welcomed with a hospitality that would have done honor to the home of any gentleman in the land, the Old Dominion and the Carolinas not excepted. I like Salem. There is a quiet, and cleanliness and respectability about it that smacks of the Quakers—or of the *better circles*, among those known as the 'higher circles;' the calm self-possession of the well-bred man or woman of the world, knowing his or her *position*. The sea-approach

to it is lovely indeed. I have entered the harbor from the North and from the South, in autumn and in mid-winter, and it was the same scene of picturesque beauty. Nothing grand, nothing awe-inspiring; but giving you the pleasure one has in seeing a fine woman, or a fine picture—anything, in short, where harmony and proportion please you.

"The week glided quickly away. On the evening previous to the day of our departure, we had crossed the bridge and walked for a mile on the pretty street leading towards Marblehead. On our return, we stopped for a few moments on the bridge. It was already dusk. The sky was black and lowering, and the street lanterns were blinking drowsily through the fog. The 'jiggers' and 'pinkeys' lay affectionately side by side, as if nestling closer together to meet the threatened storm.

"'By the by,' said our host, as we walked homeward, 'the Minerva is bound to Baltimore and will sail in a day or two. Why not stay and go home in *her*?'

"None of us had thought of such a thing; but the proposition found favor. Kent was 'dying to see a storm at sea,' and I was quite as eager to know something of 'the ropes.' It was agreed upon. We remained some few days longer, and one fine afternoon towards the last of September we bade good-by to Salem. We had fine weather during the night, and the Minerva proved to be all that we could ask. She was a beautiful bark of near four hundred tons burthen, and we were anticipating a pleasant passage. The weather changed, however, the next day, and as we were passing Gay-Head and Cuttyhunk (for we ran through the Vineyard Sound), the wind hauled to the north-east and soon freshened to a gale. What was worse, it began

to rain most furiously; a cold, driving, pelting easterly rain. One by one our light sails had been taken in; the royals and topgallant sails furled, the flying-jib stowed. The foretopmast staysail lay snug in the nettings, and the mainsail and spanker hung in the brails. Anon the topsails were reefed, and the mainsail furled, and when I went below for the night the Minerya was lying-to, under a close reefed maintopsail and foretop-mast staysail. She was an excellent sea boat; never throwing a drop of water abaft the mainmast, and riding the angry waves like an albatross in the snow and hail of Cape Horn.

“‘We shall have a dirty night of it, doctor’—I had become accustomed already to my new title—‘I’m afraid,’ said the mate, as I stepped into the companion-way to go below. ‘If you are unable to sleep, let me know, and I’ll have a hammock slung for you.’

“I thanked him, and descended to my state-room. Kent had left a message for me when she retired to call her when the gale was at the worst, whether it rained or not, though she was even then paying the customary first tribute of the landsman to the sea. My father, too, less fortunate than myself, was sea-sick, and had kept his berth during the day. What with the uneasy motion of the vessel, the hoarse, dull, husky *swash* of the sea under the stern, the creaking of the bulkheads and the dull thumping of the rudder on its pintles, it was long ere I slept. Fatigue and drowsiness, however, carried the day, and I fell into a troubled sleep—if sleep it could be called; for I remember hearing the cabin-boy, a little Bermudian, exclaiming ‘Caramba!’ as he dropped the poker on his toes in the effort to stir the coal in the little cylinder stove. I

heard the second mate, too, when he came below and called Mr. Backstaff, the first officer, or mate.

“How's the weather?” inquired Captain Spanker.

“About the same, sir. Blowing rather harder, though; and I think there'll be more wind before there's less.”

“Call me, Mr. Backstaff, if it blows any harder. And, by the by, clap a preventer on the weather yard-arm of that topsail yard. I see that the riggers rove the old brace.”

“As the ‘short, small chimes of day,’ as Tom Hood calls them, came on, I slept more soundly, and it was broad day when I awoke. I had not been long on deck before I was joined by Kent and my father. The wind was still freshening, and the ocean was white with foam. The officers, I noticed, looked a shade graver than common as they looked aloft and to windward, scanning every brace and stay, and every change in the eastern sky. There was no visible sunrise, but, instead, a driving mist, that covered us and ran off in drops to the slippery deck.

“I sha'n't be able to give ye yer cup o' coffee this mornin', Mr. Backstaff,” said the cook, who had come aft to make his apology. “The sea makes such a darnation mess on't in the galley that it aint no manner of use tu try tu du nothin'! I'm afraid I shall hev to give ye a dinner o' cold salt junk and biscuit, too; for I can't keep no water in the coppers.”

“Very good, Ezekiel. Do the best you can for us.”

“And that functionary retreated to his official duties.

“I'm afraid you'll miss Mr. —’s excellent dinners,” said Captain Spanker to Kent.

“By no means. I wouldn't have missed seeing *this* for a thousand dinners. And with my present sensa-

tions, I should be content to be on short allowance, I think you call it, for a week.'

"Night came, and the gale had not abated. I turned out at midnight, when the captain and second mate were called for the mid-watch, and went on deck. The wind had hauled more to the northward, and was blowing almost a hurricane. I had been on deck but a few minutes, when, with a report like thunder, the main-topsail burst from the bolt ropes.

"'Call the watch!' shouted the captain, as he took the wheel. 'Call all hands!' added he, as the second mate ran forward. The mate had heard the noise, and came on deck just as Captain Spanker had got the wheel up.

"'We must get her before the wind, Mr. Backstaff, and scud her while we bend the new main-staysail. Was the foresail reefed last night before it was furled?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Well, then, give her the foresail.'

"The customary 'Ay, ay, sir!' was the reply, and the mate went forward. A 'hand' was soon on the yard, and, with the necessary precautions, the foresail was loosed and set. We had been fortunate enough to get the barque before the wind without the sea once making a breach over her. The main-staysail was now got up from the sail-room, and snugly bent.

"'We must try to head her *to* again, Mr. Backstaff,' said the captain. 'I don't want to get too far to the south'ard. She lays to so well that I don't want to scud her as long as we can show any canvass. Can you get in that foresail?'

"'I'll try, sir. Lay aloft there, for'ard, and furl the foresail.'

“Half a score of men sprang into the rigging, the second mate leading the way. It was a sight of shivering terror to me, as I believe it is to most landsmen, to see their dusky forms, looking in the darkness like so many ghosts, in their silent ascent to the yard. They were speedily upon the foot-ropes. The mate, with the cook and steward, and another hand who had remained on deck, had manned the clue-garnets, leech-lines, and buntlines, and the sail was snugly brailed to the yard. The shrill voice of the second mate, as he was making up the bunt of the sail, and the cheerful response of the men, reassured me. The sail had already been gathered snugly on the yard, and two or three of the men were already in the rigging, when, above the hissing of the gale among the cordage, I heard, in tones that froze the blood in my veins,

“‘A man overboard!’

“A faint, sickening sensation was stealing upon me as I stood speechless and helpless with the shock, when a voice from forward shouted,

“‘No, sir! he’s safe. He caught the backstay as he fell!’

“The man was passing the gasket, and, thinking he had gathered in all the slack of it, was hauling it with both hands. It ‘rendered,’ and he fell. Luckily, he was just opposite the backstays—the yard having been braced to the wind—and caught one of them as he fell.

“Oh, what a dismal, comfortless night it must have been to the men!—chilly, rainy, restless, sleepless! How little is known of the hardships of the sea! The gale continued. The next day we passed a boat with spars and sails lashed in it, a barrel of flour, and other objects that proved the severity of the gale. The fol-

lowing day the gale abated. The sea went down, and we were able to show a little more canvas. An observation at noon gave us the latitude of Cape Henry, and we stood in for the land. The day was warm and sunny, and my father and Kent, with the captain's wife, and little Dora, her daughter, came on deck and basked in the sun.

"Shall we have good weather now?" asked Mrs. Spanker, addressing the captain.

"I'm afraid not, my dear. I don't half like the looks of things to the nor'ard an' east'ard."

"He was right. The gale had but lulled; and at night it blew again more furiously, as it seemed to me, than before.

"I wish we had bent that new topsail, rough as it has been to-day," said Captain Spanker as he went below. "Call me, Mr. Backstaff, if anything happens. We are a good deal nearer the banks than I care to be in a gale like this."

The bark lay to during the night, and rode easily. We were, however, drifting rapidly southward and westward, and I saw that the officers were getting uneasy at so near an approach to the dreaded Hatteras. The dawn of another day brought us no hope of better weather, and, to fill the cup of our miseries, Mr. Backstaff, who had climbed to the mizzen-top at sunset, came hastily down and whispered to the captain,

"*Land under our lee, sir, in plain sight! The Kill-devil Hills, sir, I believe.*"

"I feared as much," said the captain. "And unless the wind hauls farther to the north'ard, we are lost. Call the people aft, Mr. Backstaff."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Our situation was now explained to the men, and orders were given to make every possible preparation for the worst.

"Will she bear the foresail, Mr. Backstaff?"

"Not a minute, sir."

"Lash the helm hard a-lee, and call all hands to the cabin."

The order was executed. And but few minutes had elapsed ere every one of that little company was gathered around the captain in the little cabin. I had from the first been much impressed by the quiet dignity and self-possession, no less than by the almost court-like urbanity, of Captain Spanker. The same calmness was manifested, too, during the previous storm. But never had I seen a finer subject for an artist than the presence of the captain, as he sat in the silent cabin with the Book of books upon his knee. He had laid aside his dripping tarpaulin. The long and damp, though thin, hair hung in silvery clusters over his ample brow, and his mien seemed almost patriarchal.

He read in a low, but calm and steady, voice the account of Christ's stilling the tempest. We knelt while he offered up a fervent prayer to the Great and Good, the Father of us all, that, if it were possible, the cup might pass from us; and I felt, as I rose, that, if the Deity ever interposed to vary or restrain the laws which govern the works of his hands, he could do so at the instance of such a man, and, at such an awful hour, say to the sea, 'PEACE! BE STILL!'

A hymn was sung. We grasped each other's hands for the last parting. The captain's wife threw her arms around his neck, and sobbed and wept in a delirium of agony. And my poor father, my adored Kent—oh how

bitterly I repented what then seemed to me such folly, such infatuation as I had been guilty of, in going on board the ill-fated vessel! We huddled more closely together. The officers and crew went on deck, and we were left alone. There was no longer any disguise, and with Kent pressed to my heart I sat awaiting the terrible crisis.

"What an hour was that which succeeded! The gale seemed to have been gathering its mightiest energies for its last expiring, convulsive struggle. The tempest literally howled around us, hissed through the strained rigging, and swept with a November-like 'sugh' at intervals, that added intensity to the horrors of night, and storm, and darkness. The bulkheads creaked and groaned as the barque plunged heavily in the sea; and it was with difficulty that we could hear one another in conversation. My father was pale and grave, but calm; and as we sat, with my hand in his own, he said to me, 'Be firm, my son; all hope is not yet lost. And when the worst comes to the worst,' added he, in a whisper in my ear, 'both our efforts will of course be for *her*.'

"A silent pressure of the hand was my only reply. It had scarcely been given when Mr. Backstaff came below, and said,

"It is time you were on deck. We are nearing the land, and, unless I am mistaken, the hills I see are those of Jockey's Ridge, a little above Nag's Head. If so, the beach is of sand, without a rock as big as a gull's egg for leagues. So much for the hopeful side of the matter. I need scarcely remind you that we are still in the most imminent danger, and that nothing less than a miracle can prevent the Minerva from going ashore.'

"We followed him on deck. The roar of the breakers

was already audible. Lights were moving along the shore, and, from appearances, our situation was known to the bankers. Lashings were now passed. Spars, gratings, and the hencoop (which had been knocked into three or four pieces) lay on deck in readiness for the emergency.

“Up with your helm!” said Captain Spanker to the man at the wheel.

“Ay, ay, sir!”

“The Minerva fell off, and in a few minutes we were standing in directly for the land.

“Take care of yourselves, *all* now!” said the captain; ‘and may God have mercy upon us!’

“Those who are familiar with the coast know perfectly well that, regular as is the beach in its soundings, there are places where there are three or four fathoms of water within as many fathoms of the shore. Into one of these places, as if some good angel were guiding her, did the Minerva run, and her flying-jib-boom was far up over the beach when she struck. *Crash* went her masts over the bows!

“Forward, all of you, for your lives!” shouted Captain Spanker, as he bore his wife and child away.

“Catching Kent in my arms, I sprang after him. It was well that I did so; for, as I reached the windlass, a huge wave came curling over the stern, and sent the spray over our heads, while the foaming water filled the deck, and was as high as the palls of the windlass where we stood. So firmly was the vessel’s keel imbedded in the sand that she did not broach to, and, as she was relieved of her spars, she did not at once keel over. A rude bridge was made of the fallen top-hammer, and with the single exception of one of the fore-

mast hands, we were all safely landed on the beach. He, poor fellow, was crushed beneath the spars when the Minerva struck.

"Surrounding some three or four carts, on the beach, were a score of the bankers of both sexes. A lady, who was so closely hooded that I could not discern her features, and who had been particularly active in her exertions to get us safely off the wreck, invited us very cordially to accompany her home. The others were no less hospitable. She hoped, at least, she said, that the ladies and the gentlemen with them would consider her house their own so long as they might be pleased to stay.

"To be brief. In half an hour, Captain Spanker and his lady and child, my father, Mr. Backstaff, the second mate, Kent, and myself were surrounding a blazing fire, at the hospitable residence of Mrs. —.

"The removal of the hood revealed to us—not a very handsome, certainly—but decidedly a fine face. The figure and dress and manner were unexceptionable. We remained there a fortnight. My father seemed in no haste to get away. The Minerva was fully insured. Captain Spanker's misfortune had not affected his reputation with the owners, and a letter came from them offering him another vessel whenever he chose to take charge of her.

"When we next visited Nag's Head, Mrs. — had become Mrs. C—, and Kent Robinson had assumed the same appellation. My father took a sudden fancy to the cultivation of cotton, and accordingly sold the Maryland homestead, and removed to his wife's plantation in Bertie.

"Everything, you see, Mr. Seaworthy, to keep me here; and here I shall probably have the vital principle

shaken out of me by these North Carolina chills ! By the by," added he, as we separated, "remember that you are to dine with me to-morrow. At four, if you please; and so *au plaisir!*"

THE DREAM.

"Sopor fessos complectitur artus."

A very paradise is NAG'S HEAD for the *sleepers*; for the *dreamer*, the empyrean. At dawn of day, take thy farewell of old Somnus in such wise as to retain thy place in his good graces, for his sworn foe, Noise, gets the better of him in most of their battles. DIN is the word for it. Pots, kettles, horses, dogs, geese, chickens, children, nurses, babies, invalids, and doctors all join in the matutinal hubbub. Some bear it philosophically; some groan, some growl under the visitation; some, with outward seeming of Christian resignation, submit,

" — all hopeless of relief,
And curse the stars that had not made them deaf!"

For myself, I am in the first category. It cannot be helped.

" Sic volvere Parcas!"

and in imaginary habiliment of sackcloth and figurative sprinkling of ashes, I bow to the grim necessity with what grace I may.

I am digressing. As soon as you are up, there is regularly a proposition to bathe. The desperate-looking invalids you see on the battery in the morning at cock-crowing would here be certain to bathe. Everybody bathes. *You* would bathe here, good reader. There's no escaping it.

Well, bathing will occupy the time until breakfast. Then you will go to the bowling-alley, or ride, or walk, or fish, or visit until dinner; and your peregrinations through the sand will assuredly bring fatigue and an appetite. A siesta towards night will partially recruit you. But then comes bathing, in a second edition. Then comes the walk on the sea-beach; a fair form, a bright eye, a voice "so soft, so clear," and the natural mesmerism of young hearts—ay, and old ones, for the heart "never *all* grows old!"—that consume the time until the saloon wakes drowsily from the repose of the day, and relaxes its grim visage into an unmistakable smile. You dance until you begin to think of Dr. A——'s last advice and prescription, and are afraid to look at the clock, and then you *dig* your way, with desperate, teeth-set energy, through the dry, yielding, cringing, shrinking, nerve-depressing sand, homeward.

There arrived, you step stealthily up the stairs, (unless the family use a *ladder!*) and go to bed. And now do all things conspire to lull you to repose. Night is in full empire; and

"Night is the *time* for rest;
How sweet, when labors close,
To draw around an aching breast
The curtain of repose!
Stretch the tired limbs; and lay the head
Upon our own delightful bed!"

Old ocean's day growl has softened into what the relenting god of the sea intends to be considered a sort of lullaby (such an one, mayhap, as Polyphemus might have thundered to a young Cyclops, inclined to be restless with croup or measles); somnolent sounds and sights

are all around you. The long-drawn breath, the incipient snore, the flickering light of your expiring candle, and the smile on the face of your fellow-lodger (everybody has fellow-lodgers at Nag's Head) !

“As if sweet spirits
Suggested pleasant fancies to his soul,”

—all conspire to lull you to rest. One moment of the delicious sense of rest and of coming sleep, and you are in the land of dreams.

In such wise did I sink to rest last night. I had been particularly busy all day. In the evening, a lady coaxed me to dance, and I walked homeward very decidedly under the witchery of the evening's recollections. An eye that would have coaxed Thomas à Kempis from his self-flagellation—a form such as Mussulmen see in their dreams of heaven—a step too light and elastic to make me quite certain that my partner in the dance was of “the things of earth,” what wonder that I ran full tilt against the well-curb, fell up stairs, (causing the boy Isaac to cry “*Fire!*”) and finally tried to hang up the candle and blow out my watch.

I went to bed. I reflected a moment on the courage which I had displayed in daring to dance.

“How sleep the *brave* who sink to rest,”

thought I, and straightway I was asleep.

I dreamed. I was a traveler and on foot. The way was full of difficulties—as full, every whit, as the Pilgrim's Progress—and my companion was ——. She was an invalid; but she was *mine*. I was no longer alone. I should no longer fetter the best impulses of my heart. I loved, and “was beloved again” by the

gentlest and best of God's creatures. How patient, and painstaking, and happy was I in supporting the weary step, and in removing every obstruction from the way! There was no toil in such exertion; for, though the lips kept obstinately still, the gentle eye met my own and thanked me right eloquently. And long years of toil and poverty; a thousand hardships by land and sea; the despairing weariness of half-paid toil; the hopes half-born and crushed; the tear of bereavement; the iron heel of power; entrenched wrong; the pang of disease;—all were forgotten. The mystery was explained. The Problem of Life was solved. And my cup of joy was full to overflowing.

How long I thus slept and dreamed I know not; but mistily there cometh to my recollection, as I try to recall it all, the dusky physiognomy of Old Jeff, as he appeared to me in the first faint gleaming in the morning, and roused me from Elysian sleep with

“Maussa Gregory! Maussa Gregory!”

“Eh? hillo! What *is* it?” And again I slept.

“Maussa Gregory! Maussa Greg——!”

“What in —, what do you want *now*? ”

“Maussa John's comp'ment to you, and wants to know if Maussa Gregory bin gwoin *bathin'* dis mornin'!”

“May the — Yes, Jeff; tell him I'll be most happy to go!”

Months have passed, good reader. Yet there comes to me in loneliness and in dreams that same vision. Shall I not set up the Lares?

A STROLL.

SERGEANT TALFOURD, in his inimitable "ION," (I know it by heart almost,) makes King Adrastus say that, in the overpowering misfortunes of his early youth, he fled to the mountains, and

"Struggled with the oak
In search of weariness."

I infer from this that there were no sand-hills in Argos; for, if there be one species of bodily exertion which, more than walking in the sand, brings you the sense of weariness, I have it yet to add to my labor experiences. I have just returned from the heights (sand-hills) called Jockey's Ridge; and, as I *walked*, I am prepared to say that I began my walk homeward envious of the holiday amusement of Sisyphus and Ixion.

As I walked along the beach, I perceived, at some distance, my friend Dr. A——, with his cab and bays, and a bevy of ladies. As they came nearer, I discovered that there were two other vehicles in the rear. Accepting the doctor's very polite invitation (few people know so well how to give one), I took a seat. We fell to conversing somehow on "practice," at NAG'S HEAD; and the following is a very imperfect sketch of Dr. A.'s description of his "practice" among the negroes.

"You may set it down as an axiom," said he, "that you can never get a direct answer from a negro that will afford you the slightest clue as to what ails him. One of them came to me last evening."

"Well, Peter,' said I, 'what's the matter?'

"I'se sick!"

"Of course. I *supposed* you were *sick*, or you wouldn't come to a physician. What *ails* you?"

"I feels mighty bad!"

"Well *how?* *where?*"

"O! I'se got a mighty misery!"

"The devil take your misery! Can't you tell me what *ails* you? Have you got a colic?"

"Yes, maussa!"

"Terrible pain in your head, haven't you?"

"Yes, maussa!"

"A kind of aching in the small of your back?"

"Yes, maussa!"

"Well, you're in a bad stage of Kamtschatka cholera! Here's a dose of salts for you!"

It was late when we returned. The twilight was deepening fast into night. The moon rose as I passed the bathing-house on my way home, and I stood for some time enjoying the gorgeous beauty of the scene. The full moon, lighting up the scattered clouds along the horizon—the waves glistening beneath—the breakers throwing their foam upon the beach—the gleaming of lights from the neighboring cottages—the wide waste of sand—all these I shall not soon forget.

This is, indeed, a glorious climate; and NAG'S HEAD is a most charming place, in spite of the sand-hills, fever and ague, and other *désagréments*. As I pass day after day in almost uninterrupted sunshine, I can feel some of the enthusiasm of the young poet,* a native of North Carolina, who thus writes of the land of his sires:—

"O! Carolina, Eden of the earth!

Land of my sires, and blest scene of my birth!

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* W. H. Rhodes, Esq.

A home where Raleigh's eagle-sighted eye
Saw fields as bright as bloom beneath the sky ;
Where swift Roanoke beholds around him smile
Lands yet more fair than Deltas of the Nile ;
Where Albemarle, with sweetened tides opprest,
Allures each tribe of Ocean to her breast ;
Where Alleghany lifts his golden chain,
And sends his tribute to the thirsty main.”

I am sorely tempted to erase every line of the above commendatory paragraphs about The Old North State. I had written thus far yesterday, when I heard C—— singing,

“O ! Molly Bawn, why leave me pining ?”

I laid down my pen, and, descending to the sitting-room, brought what little voice a recent chill had left me to his assistance. What with song and chat, the morning wore rapidly away. As the clock was on the stroke of twelve, it struck me that, for so sunny a day, in the middle of August, there was a most remarkable feeling of chilliness in the air. I called the ladies' attention to the fact. They had not noticed it. I went to the piazza to see if we had an east wind. To my surprise it was south-west. The chilliness increased, and it was not until my teeth were in a Harry Gill chatter that I “gave it up,” and confessed that I had a veritable chill. Fever, opium, quinine, and other pleasant accompaniments succeeded, and I am, at this present writing, about the most emphatic commentary on climate that can be conceived.

I am interrupted by the pleasant voice of S——, who says to me very quietly, even as she would call me to dinner,

"Time to take the quinine, Mr. Seaworthy!"

By the by, Julius Cæsar must have had a "chill."
For does not Cassius say

"He had a *fever* when he was in Spain?"

It was, of course, after the chill; for, says Cassius,

"And, when the *fit* was on him, I did mark
How he did shake. * * *

And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,
Did lose his lustre. * * *

Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,
'Alas!' it cried, 'Give me some drink, Titinius!'
As a sick girl."

Perhaps the worst feature of the chills (I have a treatise in preparation on the subject, for the medical world) is the *surprise* with which you become aware of their arrival; very much such a feeling, I fancy, as the vizier's son must have felt when he found himself and his bride in Aladdin's chamber; or, to come nearer home, the pleasurable sensation you feel on discovering that the bland, urbane gentleman, "with the white hat and the big stick," who has just addressed you and shaken your hand with such "distinguished consideration," is the sheriff!

Scott somewhere tells a story of a certain abbess who preserved with religious care what she verily believed to be the bottled tears of some saint departed this life in the faith. An Irishman (from Galway, no doubt), suspected the same to be "mountain dew," or London dock; and, to the utter surprise and horror of the good abbess, who beheld the sacrilege in speechless wonderment, coolly uncorked and drank it. In some such state of feeling is the man who, after "breaking"

the chills with repeated doses of mercury and quinine, finds his teeth chattering some August noon, the thermometer at ninety-six, and his blood at zero.

You "walk the earth," sallow, thin, weak, nerveless—almost lifeless; your complexion the hue of a drum-head. You pay your debts and make your will (these being the diagnostic features of the most dangerous phase of your disease), and get angry with your friend, who bursts into a Cycloian roar of laughter while you are whispering a last message for a particular friend—a lady, mayhap—very solemnly in his ear. And, with an assurance that a Carolinian "thinks himself slighted," if he hasn't a touch of "the biliary" once a year, he leaves you to recover your spirits and your temper. Some lady friend—ten to one, 'tis a *young* lady—sends you a bouquet, and begs your friend to say to you, for her, that you need never expect another favor of the kind if you presume to have another chill.

I feel that I am dilating at very considerable length upon this fertile theme. My friend Dr. A. distinguished himself at the close of his medical studies, by a thesis, *à la* Charles Lamb, on this same subject. If I have written with any of his own graphic power of delineation, it is because of the same modest reason he gave me for the reception of his thesis; the fact, namely, that he wrote "out of the abundance of the heart." I have a sort of "weakness" for a chill, now, and it is with the emotions of "frater-feeling strong" swelling at my heart that I say *vale!*

I will only prolong these remarks by saying that the legislature seems to me to have been culpably negligent in not levying a tariff "for revenue" on this expensive,

yet general luxury, so common, like salt and tea, to all classes of society. Possibly, it might be taxable on the principle of the (in this country) growing innovation in political economy, known as "the *income tax.*" It might not be amiss to add, lest the suggestion should be misunderstood, that I am not a candidate for office.

"And now farewell! 'tis hard to give thee up!"

CHAPTER XIV.

ROANOKE ISLAND.

DIRECTLY opposite NAG'S HEAD, across ROANOKE SOUND) which is here something more than a league in breadth), is ROANOKE ISLAND. This Island, it will be remembered, is somewhat famous for being the spot on which the colonists, in RALEIGH'S second expedition, formed a settlement. The records of those days are full of massacres, murders, and other bloody scenes, on which it is almost sickening to dwell. They are but scanty; and therefore the remains of the fort, glass globes, containing quicksilver, and hermetically sealed and other relics occasionally discovered there, give rise to a thousand conjectures destined never to be solved.

ROANOKE is long, narrow, and low, but rendered beautiful by its groves and woods; among which, as you sail along the shore, you discern at intervals the small roof and curling smoke of a fisherman's cottage. It abounds, too, in the native tea-plant (called the

Yopon), and in the Scuppernong (I know not whether I spell it correctly) grape.

As you land directly opposite NAG'S HEAD, you enter a little thicket on the shore, and suddenly emerge into a little "clearing." Immediately in front of you is a snug little cottage belonging to one of the islanders, decidedly one of the tidiest and most comfortable I have seen for many a day. In front of it is a beautiful lawn containing a "grapery," underneath which you can stand and pluck the most delicious clusters until your appetite is cloyed with them. ROANOKE ISLAND is of course a place of much resort. I have myself visited it twice, and not without hope of paying it another visit. There are some fragments of legendary lore concerning it, which should not be lost. For one of these I am indebted to old Jack.

"Is you ben to ROANOKE ISLAND, Maussa Seaworthy?" inquired he of me one day.

"Yes, Jack."

"Did you see Mister Etheredge—ole Adam Etheredge?"

"No."

"Den you mought jis as well not ben gone at all."

"Why, Jack?"

"Why? In de fus place, he is de oldest man on de Island. Den he knows all about it, and 'bout de ole times. If you could jis hear de ole man tell what he's seen, and spin his long yarns dat his father and grand'ther tolle him!"

"So you have *heard* him telling his stories of old times?"

"Yes, indeed, maussa. And dere is one yarn, if you goes dere ag'in, you must ask him to spin for you."

"What *is* it, Jack?"

"Why, 'bout ELLEN BAUM, de fisherman's darter? But, Lord bless your heart, maussa, you aint ben guoine to ask *me* to spin de yarn?"

"You may, if you please, Jack; though I won't detain you. I may not be able to see the old gentleman, you know."

"O yes, maussa; you doesn't retain me at all," replied Jack, in an apologetic tone. "But Maussa Etheredge tell you so much better; though I b'lieve I knows de story as well as he does himself, for I've *done heard it* so many times."

As it would, perhaps, be tedious to the reader to peruse the story in Jack's vernacular, I have ventured to give it in my own language; though I am well aware that it must necessarily lose thereby much of the point and effect which it owed to Jack's rare powers of narrative and description. I shall be a thousandfold repaid for the labor of recording it, if it afford half the pleasure to the reader which it gave to me.

ELLEN BAUM; OR, THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER.

Many years ago, there lived on ROANOKE ISLAND but a single man, of mature years. DANIEL BAUM, for such was his name, was a son of one of the adventurers who fled from religious persecution in Virginia, (for even the English Church did not escape the bigoted and intolerant spirit of the times,) and sought a quiet home on the shores of ALBEMARLE SOUND. They found what they sought: freedom to worship God in their own way; a grateful soil; a mild climate and generous fruits; to-

gether with an unbounded supply of fish and game. They toiled; they prospered; they were happy. Their numbers increased in a ratio that would have alarmed Dr. Malthus; and so orderly and exemplary were they in their civil and social relations, that for years they lived without any established code of laws.

Conspicuous among them was old ZOETH BAUM, a patriarch in age and wisdom, to whom they referred all controversies, civil, domestic, and religious. And right worthily was their confidence reposed in him. Without exaggeration might he have adopted the words of the patriarch of Uz. “When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out. *** Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.”

But, prosperous as he had been, he was not without his share of the ills of life. It is ever the common lot—the “thorn in the flesh”—the skeleton at the feast—the Mordecai at the gate; and old Zoeth Baum was no exception to the rule. Of his three sons and three daughters, all had grown quietly up in the steadiness of good habits, and in the enjoyment of domestic happiness, with the exception of Daniel, the youngest of all. Whether or not it was the fact of his being the youngest, and therefore the pet, we will not stop to inquire. Certain

it was that the boy manifested, from his earliest years, an impatience of control that did not bode well for his future character. Did the housekeeper hide his whip or his ball? The shears, or the tongs, or a billet of wood were the ready and certain means of redress; and then came the report, the stern and impatient inquiry that would not hear the boy's defence, and then the spirit-crushing and degrading whip.

Daniel manifested, too, as he grew up, a marked fondness for hunting and fishing, especially the latter; and, to fill up the cup of his iniquities, among so primitive and simple a people, he betrayed a strong attachment to an old violin which he had purchased of a strolling musician. In those early days, men were valued and respected for the clear head, the honest heart, and the strong arm; and had Mozart, or Handel, or Beethoven lived among them, he would have been shunned as a worthless vagabond—as a heathen man and a publican. Old Zoeth Baum was passionately fond of music, and there were few evenings in the year that he did not call on his children to sing for him. They had, by the assistance of the eldest sister, attained sufficient skill to read music and carry their parts independently. Strange as it may seem, however, (and old Zoeth Baum was not alone in the senseless and unreasonable prejudice,) much as he loved music in the abstract, there was no single devotee of the art whom he did not despise from the bottom of his heart.

Instead, therefore, of suffering the boy to follow the bent of his humor, and endeavoring to encourage him to seek eminence in his favorite path, people did then as they do now-a-days. They turned a frowning face on the boy, and his temper became soured, and his

habits became unsteady; and the pharisaical passed by him, as one "joined to his idols," and fit to be "let alone." How many a warm heart and ambitious spirit has thus been crushed into sullen desperation, or apathy, or stung into remonstrance, resistance, crime, and disgrace!

The boy would not be controlled. He grew more and more shy and reserved, and spent days, and sometimes weeks, in his favorite sports. To crown all, he won the heart and hand of Susan Morrison, the belle of the colony. The secret of his absence from home was now explained. Roanoke Island was the property of his father; and, when absent on his sporting excursions, he had built, with the assistance of an old servant who was devoted to him, a comfortable cabin, and supplied it with the rude but serviceable furniture then in almost universal use. To avoid the storm which, he well knew, would follow the elopement, he carried his wife immediately to Roanoke. To her father and brothers, who followed him to recover the lost one, Daniel coolly showed the muzzles of a brace of muskets at the window; and after some parley the pursuers retreated. Devotedly attached to the affectionate girl who had consented to share the lot of one held so generally in ill repute, Daniel now became industrious and steady. The parents and friends of both were at length reconciled. His father gave him the island, and the parents of Susan showered upon her every article of comfort and luxury which it was in their power to bestow.

An only daughter was the fruit of their union. ELLEN BAUM grew up more beautiful, if possible, than her mother had been. She was a golden-haired, laughing, romping, happy-hearted girl as ever trod the green sward.

Besides the more feminine accomplishments which her mother had been able to teach her, she became expert in the management of the boats, in shooting, fishing, riding, and making of sèines and other fishing-gear. She sang sweetly, accompanying herself on an old Spanish guitar, somewhat dilapidated, indeed, for it had been an heirloom in the family, but a most excellent instrument.

Anon came Ellen Baum's sixteenth birthday. A little party had been made up in honor of the occasion, and a score of old friends from the mainland. Old Zoeth Baum was there, with his broad high forehead, smiling serenity and happiness on all. Dignity and form were laid aside. Daniel Baum took up the violin, unchid by an unkindly glance; his wife looked as young and as gay almost as she had done at twenty; and pretty Ellen Baum was the presiding genius who threw the light of joy over the festivities of the day. Many a youth was there, on the mainland, who had dared to breathe in her ear the oft-repeated words of dalliance and love; but apparently in vain. No blush, no flutter of excitement, no lowering of the lids of the most beautiful eyes in the world, ever gave her mother the suspicion even that her heart was not wholly with her parents. And yet never was there breathed aught like a charge of heartlessness or coquetry against Ellen Baum. What was a still better test of her character was the fact that the most envious of the rival belles in the colony loved her as if she had been a sister.

A most ample dinner was provided; for Daniel Baum's uniform industry and economy had made him the possessor of a moderate fortune; and the tables groaned beneath the abundance of the feast. Wine, too, there

was in plenty, manufactured from the native grape; and the guests fed much as Scott's heroes feed, in his tales of the olden time.

As they rose from the table, old John Morrison, the maternal grandfather of our heroine, sauntered to the door, and called to a servant for his pipe. He was soon joined by Zoeth Baum and his son; and they sat long over their pipes, talking of the past, while the young men were playing at football in an adjoining field.

"Bless me!" exclaimed John Morrison, as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe; "how dark it has grown all at once! Neighbor Baum," added he, addressing the old gentleman, "it is time we were going home. There'll be wind enough and to spare, and rain too, before morning. The sooner we're off the better, I'm thinking."

"No, sir! On your allegiance to me as queen of this day's ceremonies, I charge both, as good and loyal subjects, to stay," said Ellen Baum, who had come to the door unperceived.

"You might as well stay," added her father, seeing the two old gentlemen undecided. "It'll be dark before you can get home, and I wouldn't care to be off Alligator to-night myself; and I'm something younger than either of you."

"Stay, won't you?" said Mrs. Baum. "Both mother and Mrs. Morrison say they wouldn't dare to cross the Sound to-night. Besides, we expected you all to stay; for we're going to have a dance after supper, and I shall be vexed if you go."

And, as a matter of course, they decided to remain. A little fire was kindled; for, though it was then the Indian Summer, and there had been no fire during the day, the evenings were chilly, and a fire was indispens-

able. Supper was eaten, and the tables removed. High piled they the wood in the huge old-fashioned fireplace; and, as the storm gathered, the wind whistling its wild and fitful tune in every cranny, and the big rain-drops pattering musically against the panes, the home-fire blazed "broad, and bright, and high," throwing its cheerful smile over the merriest group of faces that had ever been seen on Roanoke. Daniel Baum lifted his well-worn violin from its case with much the same affectionate care that he would use in lifting a new-born infant from the cradle, and, with a few preliminary flourishes, struck the life-inspiring air of "Speed the Plough."

"Come, friend Morrison," said old Zoeth Baum, "I s'pose we must lead the way;" and, offering his hand to Madame Morrison, he led her upon the floor. John Morrison was in nowise reluctant to comply with his neighbor's request; and Madame Baum, the elder, declining to dance, he successfully made overtures to the younger matron. The set was soon formed. Air followed air, dance followed dance; and if the admirers of Ellen Baum had before been fascinated, they were on this occasion bewildered by her grace, her good humor, her tact, that made everybody pleased with himself, and the genuine kindness of heart that suffered no occasion of conferring a kindness to escape unimproved.

Midnight found the dancers still in high feather. The storm had increased to more than usual fury; but it was unheeded. The flush of happy excitement was on the cheeks of all;

"The roof rung with voices light and loud;"
and the strains of the music were mingling happily with

the hum of voices, when suddenly a vivid flash of lightning illuminated the darkness, and was almost instantaneously followed by a clap of thunder that shook the cottage to its foundations.

The dance ceased.

"My children," said old Zoeth Baum, "we have passed a happy day. The night is now half gone, and it is time that all of us, young and old, should retire to rest. The great and good Father of us all has crowned us with blessings, and for his kind care over us these many years, let us not forget to return our thanks."

The sounds of merriment were hushed. A table was placed in the centre of the room; candles were placed upon it; and Ellen Baum took the old family Bible, covered carefully with green baize, from its nook in the book-case, and gave it to her grandfather. Adjusting his spectacles carefully, he opened the sacred volume at the story of Naaman, and read the whole to the attentive listeners. A hymn followed: those beautiful words,

"Thy goodness, Lord, doth crown the year;
Thy paths drop fatness all around;
And barren wilds in thee rejoice,
And vocal hills return the sound."

The strains of the hymn ceased, and all knelt in prayer. The heart of old Zoeth Baum was full. He spoke of the days of other years, when a little company of exiles sought a home in the wilderness. He acknowledged the goodness which had blessed them all in basket and store. Children had grown up around them to cheer and comfort their declining years. The field had yielded them its golden sheaves of rustling corn; the trees had bent

low with their burden of fruit ; the vine had yielded its increase, and their flocks had multiplied many-fold. And when, as he recounted all these gifts of a bountiful Providence, and said, in fullness of heart, “Father ! we *thank thee !*” the big tears chased one another over those furrowed cheeks in eloquent attestation of the earnestness and sincerity with which he uttered the words.

He spoke of those who were kneeling with him at the family altar ; the young and the old ; the son whom he had once thought lost, now industrious and happy; and, last of all, of her whose birthday they had met to commemorate. “To thy care, O Father!” said he, in tones that quivered as he spoke, “we commit her. We pray not that thou wouldest take her out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep her from the evil. May thy choicest blessings ever fall upon her pathway in life, and thy grace descend upon her heart as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass ! And now, Father, to thee do we commend all sorts and conditions of men : the broken in heart ; the erring and the guilty ; the prisoner in his narrow cell ; the sufferer on the couch of sickness ; the mariner in this pitiless storm, tossing leagues away in the darkness of the angry sea. Let thy blessing rest upon this hospitable roof, and may we who here kneel to thee for thy blessing rest in peace ! We ask all in the name of him who hath taught us, when we pray, to say, ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’ ”

And he repeated the Lord’s Prayer, the worshipers uniting with him.

“Good-night, my son !” said he, as he rose to retire. “Good-night, my daughter ! Good-night, friends ! El-

len, my darling, my kiss before I go!—Hark! eh? Wasn't that a gun? There's a vessel in the offing in distress. What can we do?"

"We will see," replied Daniel Baum, tying on his sou'wester.

"But you don't think of trying to cross the Sound to Nag's Head, on such a night as this?"

"And why not, my dear father? I've crossed it in as severe a storm as this. The wind is from the south'ard, about sou'-southeast, and I can run across in half an hour. There's no room for a sea, you know, with the wind in this quarter; and with a balance reef in her mainsail, the *Ellen* will live anywhere."

Much against the remonstrances of all save his wife, who had implicit confidence (and with reason) in her husband's judgment and skill, Daniel Baum selected three of the robust young men, and, loosing his favorite boat from her moorings, got under way for the eastern shore of the Sound. Well was it, that night, for Daniel Baum that he had kept his boat and her rigging and sails in good repair; for, with all her seaworthy qualities, and with his utmost skill, she was more than once nigh swamping. No wonder, then, that the party landed less than a league to the southward of Collington Island. Fortunately, however, they had landed abreast of the ill-fated vessel; and, securing the boat by hauling her "high and dry" upon the shore, they set off at a brisk pace through the woods towards the ocean. A walk of about one mile brought them to the beach. And there, with her broadside exposed to the fury of the storm, her spars gone by the board, lay the hull of a large ship. All around is Egyptian darkness. There are no signs of life, either on the shore or on the wreck. In the roar

of the breakers no cry can be heard, and in their fury they would render any attempt to reach the vessel worse than useless. The foam throws a dim light upon some objects floating in the surf, but not enough to define their form; while, overhead, the dark masses of clouds are rushing headlong on their airy path. The breakers come tumbling in masses of foam—

“*Exultant que vada, atque æstu miscentur arænæ.*”

As they stood upon the shore, uncertain what to do, a sudden flash of lightning revealed to their gaze a most appalling spectacle. Several bodies, lifeless to all appearance, were discernible in the surf; and directly in front of them the waves dashed a spar within a fathom of where they stood. To this were lashed two persons; one a girl, who, by her appearance, could not have been more than twelve years of age, and the other a young man, probably some six or eight years her senior. Commissioning two of his companions to rescue any others that might be thrown upon the beach, Daniel Baum and Wilson Morrison resorted to the usual means in order to restore animation. To their delight, they were successful; and, as similar efforts on the part of their companions had been of no avail, the bodies which had been thrown upon the shore were placed beyond the reach of the tide. Rude litters, of drift-wood, were then constructed; and, placing the youth and the girl upon them, they set forth on their way homeward, with the intention of paying a second visit to the sea-shore in the morning.

It was not yet day when they reached the cottage. With the aid of warm flannels, friction, and the use of gentle stimulants, the sufferers were restored to con-

sciousness, and soon sank into a profound sleep. The gale abated as the day dawned, and another party visited the wreck. Three bodies more were rescued from the water; but they had evidently been dead for several hours. The remainder of the ship's company, it was subsequently discovered, had been drowned in the cabin and forecastle.

A week passed away. The bodies of the unfortunate mariners had been interred. The guests had returned to their homes; while the strangers had recovered from the consequences of the storm, had written home, and were expecting their friends to arrive in the course of the next fortnight. Aside from the gratitude they felt towards the inmates of the cottage, Edward Merrill and his sister Alice had already learned to regard them all with a warmer feeling. No one, indeed, could resist the influence of the honesty, kindness, and delicacy which distinguished Daniel Baum and his wife, while Ellen had unconsciously added another to her many conquests. The young people had walked together, rode together, sailed together, and were getting to be "coupled and inseparable." What wonder that they loved?

A fortnight passed, and there was yet no intelligence from home. The ensuing week, however, would, out of all question, bring Mr. Merrill, and Edward was beginning to ask himself if it were possible for him to leave Roanoke. It was Sabbath evening; and Ellen had accompanied him in a walk along the shore to a point where an oak hung over a steep bank, with a vine enveloping its branches, and hanging down well nigh to the ground.

"Ellen," said he, timidly, "it is scarcely probable that I shall remain here more than a day or two longer.

I cannot leave you without asking you again if there be no way in which I can serve you or yours; without thanking you, once more, for all your kindness, and telling you how grateful we are, and—and—”

“We have but done our duty, and for that we do not deserve thanks.”

“But there has been something more than the mere performance of duty. There have been kindness, and gentleness, and I know not what that has won the heart of my sister Alice—and mine, too, Ellen. *Dear Ellen, I love you!*”

There was no reply. But, trembling like an aspen leaf, Ellen Baum stood with eyes downcast, and her little foot making divers figures in the sand.

“Have I offended you? Answer me, Ellen! Speak to me! Forgive me if I have caused you a moment's pain. Believe me, dearest Ellen, I love you! Better than my life, I love you!”

And again there was no reply; but the gentle girl, now assured of his love, and partially recovered from the momentary excitement, lifted her soft eyes to his own with an expression to which he gave a most liberal interpretation; for the next instant she was pressed to a heart that had never known one throb which its owner need have blushed to reveal. And there, in the soft light and mild air of that November sunset, plighted they their troth. A clear, low voice interrupted the closing ceremony of the compact with a “Why, brother Edward!” and a laugh that woke the woods around with its musical echoes.

The rest is soon told. Henry Merrill's father was a merchant in Boston. The son and sister were going with Captain C——, in one of their father's ships, to

Cuba, and the governess who had embarked as a companion for Alice was drowned at the time of the wreck.

Old Zoeth Baum died soon afterwards, and Daniel Baum and his wife were prevailed upon, with no little difficulty, to accompany the Merrills to Boston. The traveler on the railroad from Boston to —— may, to this day, see Ellen Baum and her group of manly sons and lovely daughters, two of the latter having families of their own. But the golden hair, the joyous laugh, the “springing motion in her gait,” her beauty, in short all save the affectionate, earnest, eloquent eye that wins, as it won in youth, the hearts of all who meet her, are gone. Daniel Baum rests beside the remains of his sire, which he had taken from their first resting-place, some years before his own death. May they rest in peace!

CHAPTER XV.

THE SERVANTS.

I KNOW of no feature of life in the south better worthy of close observation and the most thorough study than the condition and character of the negroes. Whoever does not so observe and study fails to understand the most important parts of the great machine of social life, and must be wholly ignorant of the manner and source of its action. If the stranger be an abolitionist, whatever be his benevolence, his sincerity, and his zeal,

without careful study of the negro character they would be, to a great extent, lost, because of the ignorance of his benefactor. If, on the contrary, you look upon slavery as an institution permitted by the Deity, as one of the grades of social life, most assuredly are the habits, feelings, tastes, and condition of the negro worthy of careful study.

I find, in the intercourse of master and servant here, far more genuine kindness and sympathy on the part of the master than at the North. There is no hesitation in the cordial shake of the hand, when they meet after a short absence. There is no uneasy feeling as to what Mrs. Grundy will say if you are seen talking, walking, or riding with a negro. There is none of the fawning servility on the part of the latter which distinguishes so many of their brethren at the North. The sick are carefully provided for. The idle and the vicious usually escape with far less than their deserved punishments. During the seven months of my residence in Carolina, I have seen but one house-servant struck; and the blow was a box on the ear. The only other instance I have seen was that of a vicious slave flogged at the whipping-post.

I am not about to discuss the subject of slavery, or to defend the institution. I will only add that it gives me pleasure to say that I find the condition and treatment of the slaves a thousandfold better than I expected.

It was my purpose, merely, in devoting a chapter to The Servants, to give some account of some two or three with whom I was most in contact. And first, there is

OLD 'TITIA.

Her peculiar province, in the domestic empire, is the laundry. You may see her almost any day of the week, and almost any time of the day, standing just outside the kitchen door, underneath a dilapidated porch that looks as if it were ready to fall upon her head. She has an old pipe in her mouth, none of the freshest and tidiest in appearance, I am sorry to say; and before her is either the washing-tub or the ironing-table. She is a sort of matriarch among the negroes; all of them fearing or liking her. Taciturn, prompt, decided, there is a flash in her black eye that inspires all the other servants with a very decided respect. No one thinks of playing or trifling with Old 'Titia, (Letitia is the full name, I take it;) and even her master and mistress show her more deference than is often seen in the treatment of the domestics.

For her *physique*, she is strongly made, and above the middle height. To me, her head is the subject of most frequent observation. Ordinarily, the rebellious curls are tied down, gathered compulsorily in a knot at the back of the head; but, of a Sabbath-day, or when we have company, the ebon locks *stand out* manfully for their rights, spread in unfettered luxuriance, and give her much the appearance of the Pythoness *in furore*, or a South Sea Islander prepared for a dance, as we see her depicted in the old geographies. On such occasions, there is a deepening of the wrinkles between the eyebrows, more than wonted dignity of gait, and a swing that would not disgrace Pennsylvania Avenue.

Old 'Titia is a sort of Dido in the domestic Carthage,

"instans operi." Ever and anon, in the most of her toil, she hums snatches of old hymns in a low, monotonous key. Little Simon, the baby of the kitchen, sometimes tunes his pipes by way of accompaniment; but an admonitory "Hush!" a glance of those sharp eyes, and a raising of the forefinger, usually discourage that miniature colored gentleman from any further manifestations of his musical skill.

She is strictly honest. I would trust her with any amount of money. She loves a joke, and enjoys it with infinite relish. Better than all, I believe her to be truly a Christian. Such is Old 'Titia. During my illness, hers was the hand on which I most confidently relied for the many wants of the sick-room. Her look was full of kindness, her step noiseless, her voice low and musical, and her vigilance and attention were unremitting. May her shadow never be less!

BILL

Is another of our domestics. I should scarcely have ventured on so particular a notice of him but for one or two very strongly-marked traits of character. He is a short and somewhat fat negro, some twenty years old, peradventure. Rather an Adonis among the colored ladies, Bill affects *bijouterie*; wears rings in his ears; and, if my memory serve me faithfully, a breastpin. Indeed, he is one of the professed lady-killers here, and wears his laurels jauntily.

But there is another trait of his that demands more particular notice. At the age of fifteen, Bill was smitten with a passion for music, and, true to the whim-

sicalities of musical people, chose the fife, of all the instruments, as best befitting "the lips of Phœbus."

It is recorded of Columbus that some eighteen years of persevering effort was the price of his greatness. Fulton was scarcely less fortunate. Emulous of such fortitude and perseverance, Bill has, since the year 'forty-five, been learning to play the fife. Had he foreseen the "series longissima rerum" that must precede the desired success, I do believe that he would have abandoned the idea; but the step was taken, and for looking back!—it was not a thing to be thought of. With indefatigable energy has he toiled on, the frowns of the goddess of Harmony to the contrary notwithstanding; and it appears to have been reserved to the author of these sketches to record his progress, his feats of arms—and fingers.

It has not escaped the observation of his friends that Bill's organ of tune is exceedingly small. Worse than this, its development, from years of assiduous practice, gives but feeble hopes to anybody, save himself, that he will make conquest of any one entire strain of music. Certain notes, to say the truth, he *has* worsted; and in a desperate border-warfare on the confines of "Hail Columbia" he is said to have reduced certain outposts of crotchets and quavers to a very critical condition. Certain notes, too, he has pressed into service. But his ranks are liable at any moment to be so thinned by desertion as to leave him helpless. I am informed, but do not hold myself responsible for the statement, that he has this summer ventured (emboldened, it would seem, by his little skirmishes with the enemy) on a pitched battle with a detachment of the main army of

La Sonnambula, to the utter rout and discomfiture, though, assuredly, not to the entire conquest thereof.

If I may change the figure, Bill can never sail in the wake of the “air” he is in pursuit of. His fife is not at all a weatherly craft; drifting fearfully to leeward, and requiring half a gale to bring out her sailing qualities. Resolute, nevertheless, to keep in the enemy’s wake, and at times (to do him justice) successful, he will, all of a sudden, *yaw* off three or four points, or else be “all in the wind;” lose steerage way, it may be, and flounder “in irons.”

A compeer of his, and decidedly *a character*, is

ISAAC.

He is a boy of about fourteen years of age, and a mulatto. He is intelligent, and naturally active; with a shrewdness worthy an older head. I may safely set it down, as one of the most prominent of his distinguishing traits of character, that he is never to be found at the precise period of time when he is wanted. How many times a day do I hear Maria, the cook, calling, at the top of her voice,

“*Izik! IZIK! IZIK!*”

There is usually no reply; but, after the lapse of from five to thirty minutes, the unconscious Isaac walks into the kitchen as coolly as if ears had been wanting in the inventory of his chattels personal. Under no circumstances does his eye fall before your own. No blow could make his ire visible, save in the more intense glistening of his Spanish eyes. He has a low, musical voice, and is an excellent waiter for any one whom he happens to like.

I should not omit to say that he has one other quality in perfection, which is an amiable weakness in most of his brethren. I allude to the power which he manifests, to consume more minutes, or hours, in blacking one's boots, going for letters and papers, or a pail of water, than any individual whom it has been my privilege to meet.

With no farther mention of Harriet and Cely than the statement that both are excellent servants, I close these notices of the servants by a word or two concerning

OLD JEFF.

Imprimis: The name Jeff, I take it, is an abbreviation of Jefferson. Jeff is, I think, verging closely to the last of "the thirties." He is a short, Sancho Panza-like, squatly negro; as irascible as a violinist or a schoolmaster. In ludicrous contrast to his diminutive stature, is a rough, deep, heavy voice, of a prevailing tone approaching to oratund. He is a man of business; bustling, fidgety, authoritative; loves a joke, and has a weakness for "mountain dew" and Old Monongahela. With all his faults, however, old Jeff is a jewel of a servant, if allowed to have, occasionally, the bent of his humor. I cannot close these desultory observations concerning the servants without saying how much I have been disappointed in my estimate of them and of their condition. I had been taught to suppose that I should find them sullen, revengeful, crouching, and unhappy. My surprise, then, may be imagined in finding them ignorant indeed, but affectionate, docile, faithful; and, in most cases, to all appearance, contented and happy.

In my own intercourse with them, which has been, of necessity, somewhat limited, I am glad to say that I have found them almost uniformly respectful, obliging, patient, and faithful. I owe—and who does not?—much to them. A kind word, or a smile, is the only reward they expect. In sickness, they are ever ready to do all in their power. The boy Isaac repeatedly slept on the floor in my chamber when I was sick, and never manifested the slightest impatience or sullenness in being robbed of his accustomed and needful hours of repose. May the day soon come when they shall all peacefully be made free!

Let the true friend of his race teach the young the solution of the once mysterious problem of life, by giving them the truth on which “hang all the law and the prophets.” “Let but the principles of the Gospel prevail,” said an eloquent divine, “and the fetters of the slave would fall to the ground. *Fall*, did I say? They would MELT from off his limbs!”

I cannot forbear, in conclusion, quoting the eloquent language of the brilliant, earnest, large-hearted John Weiss, of Massachusetts. In speaking of the reforms, he says,

“What will *be* this future idea, or movement, so mighty as to surpass conventional barriers, and make of one blood all the nations of men?” * * * “It will result from no single movement. Its germ will be no idea of the intellect. It will be the consequence of no congress of nations, no arbitration, no political compromise. It will result from a simple faith in moral principles.” * * * “Teach men that this *common goodness* is the secret of common harmony; * * * teach them that only kind of truth which sancti-

fies, and they will rush together like kindred atoms.
* * * The state shall be the world; the nation will be all mankind; the Church of God will be builded out of human hearts, which are made of one color, and are full of one blood, and whose pulses beat with equal motion beneath the shadow of the iceberg and the palm."

I believe the day to be not far distant when the fair Tree of Liberty shall gather all kindreds and tongues beneath its ample shade. Freedom is progressive.

"Its growth is of the cedar,
That knoweth not decay;
Its top shall bless the mountain
Till mountains pass away.
Its top shall greet the sunshine,
Its leaves shall drink the rain,
Till on its blessed branches
The Slave shall hang his chain."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FRESH PONDS.

ABOUT three miles from the Hotel, and about midway between Albemarle Sound and the sea, are several ponds of fresh water. In the golden age of NAG'S HEAD, *videlicet*, in its early day, they are said to have been full of the finest fish. On almost any day in August or September, you might have found half a score of resolute anglers, patiently plying their taciturn voca-

tion in the shade of overhanging trees. Many and wonderful are the legends, wherewithal my ears have been regaled, of scores on scores, as the grasshoppers for multitude, that some veteran knight of the hook and line has caught "between sun and sun."

As with most other things earthly, "those good old days" have carried away with them the glory of the Fresh Ponds. There are fish yet, and in plenty; but they are small; and fishing at the Ponds now does duty as symphony or interlude to the pic-nic *opera*; (this last word being translated somewhat more literally than usual.) The Ponds are now as frequent a resort, perhaps, as they ever were; but for pleasure excursions, and not for fishing.

The first sound that met my ear this morning, just as the first rays of the sun were peering into our little dormitory, was the voice of S——, who opened my door with a

"*Won't* you, Mr. Seaworthy? Now say you *will*. You will, *won't* you?"

"Without the least doubt I will, my dear S——; but what *is* it?"

"So, you didn't hear me? You sleep soundly this morning. I was asking you if you wouldn't join us in a pic-nic to the Fresh Ponds."

"The very place I've been wishing to visit. You'll be away soon, I suppose."

"Immediately; that is to say, as soon as Isaac and old Jeff can get the buggy and cart, and borrow a horse for you from Mr. C——; and that is to say, about nine o'clock." And S—— left me.

The note of preparation—don't somebody call it so?—was soon audible. All manner of victuals and refresh-

ments, fish, flesh, foul, pies, cake, brandy, claret, pickles, salt and pepper were in requisition. A frying-pan and jug of water were added to the other articles; and about nine o'clock, as S—— had predicted, forth went our caravan along the shore of the Sound. After riding half a league on the shore, we turned our faces inland, and passed through the finest part of "the up-guoines," as the Bankers are pleased to call the hill-country, which I have yet seen. The road was sandy, indeed, but wound pleasantly over hill and through valley till we reached the Ponds.

On our arrival, our party was found to number twelve. Mrs. W——, Miss G——, the Misses C——, Dr. A——, my friend and chum C——, J——, young G——, Dr. M——, Rev. Mr. F——, and myself.

Fortunate for us that Dr. A—— was with us; for, with an energy worthy—of a better cause, I was about to say—of the occasion, he not only began fitting hooks, lines, and poles, but set everybody else at work. It was not long before divers young ladies and gentlemen, and some older ones, might have been seen (that's the phrase, I believe, in your genuine narrative style), wending their way, with grave but earnest faces, and with malice prepense at their hearts, towards the scaly community there dwelling and residing. The hooks were baited with bacon, and thrown into the water. And then came a very solemn pause! The party to which I had trusted my fortunes were unsuccessful. I made my retreat. Dr. A—— and his companions had been more fortunate; and, in all, near a hundred small fish were the victims of *our* piscatory skill.

In the division of labor made on the occasion, it fell to my lot to be a gatherer of fagots and the builder of

fires; while to our clerical friend, who enjoyed the thing to the full, was allotted the labor of the *cuisine*. And soon, fragrantly to our nostrils, came the appetite-provoking savor of bacon and fish. A cart was drawn up to the buggy, and on the thills we placed a few pieces of boards to serve as a table. The feast was spread, and the havoc began—and was finished.

It was not until towards sunset that we began our journey homewards. It was agreed on all hands that we had had “a most delightful time.” How delightful it was to me, and wherefore so, are points that I reserve for my father-confessor.

Since the excursion above described, I have again visited the Fresh Ponds. The lapse of a few weeks merely had given the tinge of the past to the former excursion; and the thought of it, and the familiar faces that had left us, made me sad for the remainder of the day.

I remember singing, on the occasion, a favorite song,

“ Hark ! brothers, hark !”

which I had last heard on our way home from the Ponds.

“ Didn’t Miss C—— sing that well ?” said J—— abruptly, after accompanying me in the song. And the words, and the air, and the scene led me into a long reverie about “ the old familiar faces :”

“ How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some have been taken from me ; all are departed ;
All, ALL are gone, the old familiar faces !”

I remember, too, that I went to a particular tree, an evergreen, and plucked from one of its lowermost

branches a leaf such as — had plucked from it, and given to me. I could not talk as we rode homeward. I watched the wheels of our venerable vehicle as they rolled, with a monotonous whine, through the dry sun-heated sand. I looked at the sky and the clouds; at the woods; at the Sound; at our Rosinante, then apparently in a dangerous stage of decline: at all things visible; but in vain. The memory of the first visit *would* intrude; and J—— declared himself bored by my presence and sluggish taciturnity. Shall I ever see them all again, I wonder?

CHAPTER XVII.

AN EXCURSION TO THE INLET.

“Rursus agam pelago?”

SOME three or four leagues southward from NAG'S HEAD, as the reader will see by the maps, is the NEW INLET. If I am rightly informed, there have been several inlets from the ocean into the cordon of sounds on the coast of the Carolinas, which are now filled up. Such is the case with Currituck Inlet. What is called New Inlet has not been long open, and it is both narrow and shallow. The only light-house, for leagues along the coast, is quite near it.

It is usually thought almost indispensable for the stranger at NAG'S HEAD; and it is by no means uncommon for the oldest residents to pay a visit to the

New Inlet. I had, therefore, from the first, counted upon the excursion as an event that would certainly occur. I was prevented from going until yesterday; and am seated now to give, in all their primitive freshness, my "first impressions" of the trip.

For the last few days, one family after another has left NAG'S HEAD for home. Yesterday was the day appointed for the departure of our excellent neighbor, Mr. N——; and when I went out upon the sand-hills yesterday morning, the little Fox, the packet, was lying abreast of our landing with nearly all Mr. N——'s furniture on board. There were some half a score of negroes returning to and fro, and the boats were plying off and on in the hurry of departure.

It was agreed that the ladies should go off to the packet in my friend W——'s boat. She was accordingly loosed from her moorings, and brought within some two or three rods of the shore. The ladies rode off to her in a cart, and Mr. N——, his son Dr. N——, and myself followed them. We got under way with a fresh breeze and stood for the packet. We were not long in making the discovery that we could not "fetch," and therefore ran under stern of the Fox, and a short distance beyond her, with the intention of tacking, and running alongside the packet on the larboard tack. So deeply laden was our boat that she missed stays. We had no oar, and she refused to "jibe." And thereupon ensued a delicious state of confusion; Mr. — quieting the fear of ladies; one recommending the expedient of letting go the jib halyard, and another that of waring ship. While in the quandary, young N—— came to our assistance with a boat and two stout oarsmen; and

making our painter fast in the stern sheets, he *towed our vessel round*, and we arrived safely alongside the packet.

With such experience of a pleasure excursion with the boat, I had resolved to disembark at the earliest opportunity; but when we returned to the landing, my friend the doctor prevailed on me to sail a little longer. On our second return to the shore, the children came running down the hill, and announced to us that the whole family were making arrangements to go to the Inlet. Mr. W—, the children, Dr. M., a servant, Isaac, the fisherman, and myself were to go into the boat, while J— and the ladies were to go in the buggy and cart along the sea-shore.

Accordingly, a jug of fresh water and pail of provisions, together with provender for the horses, were put on board. In an hour we were ready, and got under way with a smacking breeze on our starboard quarter.

Away we went in fine style; and though I had many an anxious throb of solicitude for the dilapidated old structure of canvas and stitches, “by the courtesy” called a sail, I oftener laughed at some humorous sally from V— and S—. We were under the Palinurian auspices of Dr. M—, my friend W— most unequivocally declaring, at intervals, through the day, that “he was only a passenger!” The boy Isaac (not the house-servant) seemed to have caught the prevailing tone of good humor (a fair wind makes everybody good-humored), and he amused himself in depicting to his fellow-servant, in graphic style, the peculiar joys of sea-sickness. We had “a beautiful run of it.” Rather

a long one, indeed, and longer than we had anticipated; and Isaac did not materially shorten the apparent distance by his constant attention to V— and S— that we were not yet “half-way to de Inlet.”

O for that gift of second sight so seldom enjoyed in these degenerate modern times ! O for the Chaldee's skill in reading the pages of “the poetry of Heaven!” O for one of those magic stones, or glasses, in which men have gazed and read the future!

We had relied on Isaac as a pilot, for he had been to the Inlet, as, indeed, had Mr. W— ; but neither of them remembered the channel ; and in the full tide of pleasant anticipations (for the light-house was plainly in sight), we ran aground on an immense bar ! By dint of a little labor we contrived to force the boat along for another furlong, and then she flatly refused to budge another inch. Dr. M—, Isaac, and myself sprang overboard, and dragged her along for, perhaps, half a mile, when the water had become so shallow as to make it impossible to proceed, at least with my friend W—'s aldermanic weight in the boat. I thought it a little ungenerous of him not to share our toil ; but, as the doctor had made some unmistakable allusions to the quantity of *ballast*, I said nothing.

Was it Solomon who broached the theory that “in the multitude of counselors there is safety ?” It may be true enough on shore, for aught I know ; but on a pleasure excursion, the doctrine does not hold good. I was for having Mr. W— get out of the boat, in order that we might, at least, get V— and S— on shore at the light-house, whence they could easily get home. Besides this plan, there were several others.

Dr. M—— thought the channel was farther on : Mr. W—— thought we had passed it.

At length it was reluctantly decided that we should drag the boat off towards the broad sound—reluctantly, I say, for we thought we saw the ladies on the shore. Fortunately for them, they had divided the refreshments, and carried the dessert in the vehicles.

After dragging the boat over the sand for nearly half a mile (it seemed a league to me), she at last floated, and we stood over to the western shore of the sound. The wind was ahead, the afternoon was far on the wane, and, to complete the unpleasant features of the prospect, the tide was running “like a mill-race”—the wrong way ! We gained slowly, however, and possibly might have “beat” home before the ensuing Sabbath—the day being Thursday.

As we approached the western shore on the starboard tack, the strap which held the sprit to the mast parted, and the sprit dashed down with a dull thump through the bottom of the boat ! The water came rushing in at a fearful rate. I gave Isaac my handkerchief, to which he added his own, and in this way we reached the shore (a marsh), and hauled the boat up to repair damages. We accomplished this but imperfectly, as a matter of course, inasmuch as we had neither tools nor materials. We ventured, however, on embarking again, and after making one or two stretches, during which it was necessary to bail with a bucket, and in which we “fetched” the very place where we got under way, we again resorted to the expedient of towing. But slow progress made we in the reeds and mud, and, as the sun must soon set, our situation was becoming desperate.

V—— and S—— were tired, too, and the spirits of the whole party were at zero. What should we do?

“Sail O !” was the welcome cry, as we stood undecided; and presently a small “dug-out” from Hyde* came ploughing along, with her jib out-rigged like a lower studding-sail. Luckily, Dr. M—— knew one of the gentlemen aboard. We hailed her, and she ran down to us. We briefly explained our situation to them, and my friend W—— very pathetically threw his disconsolate self and no less miserable party upon their mercy. One of them, a fine, hearty fellow, immediately attempted—coolly smoking his pipe meanwhile—to repair our damages; but in vain; and, although it was a very serious inconvenience to him, consented to convey us either to Roanoke Island or to Nag’s Head. His companion, who was in a great hurry to get home, was not quite so deeply impressed with Mr. W——’s eloquence; and when the decision was announced, he exclaimed, with an emphasis and energy which make me laugh even now when I think of them, “*Dod rot it all! Dod dog the luck!*” The reader can translate the exclamation.

As we stood out from the shore, two other boats hove in sight; both evidently bound northward. It was then decided, after some discussion, that we should speak one of them; and if she would not take us to Nag’s Head, our deliverers would do so—our tall friend who had come so nigh swearing, declaring that he would see us safely home, “if it took a week.” Fortunately, the skipper of the boat which we spoke

* The North Carolinians say Hyde, Hertford, Bertie, &c., and not Hyde county, Bertie county, &c.

consented to take us, and we were soon on board. Bidding our Hyde county friends good-bye, we were soon under way homeward.

The wind partially failed, and we made but poor progress. We were chilly, wet, hungry, and fatigued. The poles were got out, and what with them and the breeze, we at last reached the landing. Mrs. W—— was on the shore to welcome us. We paid the skipper a liberal price for his trouble, and invited him to sup with us; but he was anxious to reach Elizabeth City with his little cargo of corned mullets, and he bade us good night, and got under way. With womanly foresight, Mrs. W—— had prepared us a hot supper. A bowl of whisky-punch, an excellent dish of coffee, with other more substantial fare, went far to recruit our strength and spirits; and with many a laugh over our misfortunes, and many a desperate resolve never again to go on a *pleasure* excursion to the New Inlet again—by water, we retired to rest.

“*Forsan et hæc, olim, meminisse juvabit,*”

thought I, as I laid my aching, ague-stricken limbs upon the bed; — and I slept.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AMUSEMENTS.

THE amusements at all watering-places are, as far as I happen to know, much the same. There are, how-

ever, some points in which those of NAG'S HEAD are somewhat peculiar. Gentlemen who are fond of fox-hunting bring their horses and hounds, and go galloping over the treacherous sands, much to the hazard of both horse and rider. The disciples of Walton and Stoddart can fish here without the aid of the "Complete Angler," and catch an abundant supply. Then there are excursions to the Fresh Ponds, to Roanoke Island, Kill Devil Hills, and the New Inlet. Bathing occupies, too, and right pleasantly, many an hour that might else hang heavily upon one's hands. Then there is the drive on the beach, or, if you prefer it, the walk; alone, in the

"Society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea,"

or with one or more companions of your own choosing. Besides these, there is a bowling-alley, where the boarders from the hotel and the residents from the hills meet at nine or ten in the forenoon, and remain until the dinner hour.

But the centre of attraction is the hotel. A siesta after the late dinner leaves you time for a short stroll about sunset; and after tea, dressing is the universal occupation. At length, sometimes as early as eight o'clock, but oftener at nine, or a later hour, the musician makes his appearance. The twang of the strings, even, as he tunes it, is enough to call the little folks around him; and it is not long before the ladies make their appearance; the sets are formed, and the long-drawn "*Balance, all!*" gives the glow of pleasure to every face.

It was my delight, albeit I am a quiet sort of man,

grateful always, like the man in "The Spectator," to those who will not speak to me when I am not "i' the vein" of conversation, to obtain a seat in the corner and look at the dancers. Charmed by the gayeties of the dancing-saloon, I once forgot my years and gravity so far as to make a promise to a young lady that I would go to the hotel the next day and *learn the figures*. I had a chill the next day, and my dignity survived the threatened fall.

Upon these amusements there are some very serious drawbacks, among the most serious of which is the constant loss of familiar faces. You meet a pleasant acquaintance the first week of your stay, and he is gone with the next packet. Then there is the sand, through which it is so hard to walk or ride, and which is always filling one's eyes and shoes. The wind blows almost constantly, forgetting now and then all its decorum, and performing all sorts of mad antics on land and sea. In conclusion, permit me to apologize, worthy reader, for the omission of what may be called, *par excellence*, THE amusement at Nag's Head. That ever I should have forgotten the staple of fun—the State-patronized FROLIC—THE CHILLS AND FEVER ! *chacun à son goût* !



CHAPTER XIX.

THE BANKERS.

IT is very possible that the reader has been, ere this, comparing me to the manager who announced for the

evening "the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out." Where, who, and what are THE BANKERS?

Where, indeed? I have made but scanty mention of them, and the two months are well nigh gone. I accept the reproof. To say the truth, I have seen but little of them. True, I know that they are the landholders along the ridge of land that serves as a natural breakwater for the protection of the chain of sounds on the coast of Carolina. I have seen them mending their nets, I have chatted with them, and yet I know but little of their character and habits. My friend Dr. A—— tells me that many of them are miserably poor, and that he not unfrequently prescribes (and, to his credit, *puts up and sends the prescription*) simply a little wholesome food. Many of them, he informs me, have most singular prejudices concerning medicine. He filled a small phial with a mixture for a child, the other day. The next morning the sister of the little patient came for more medicine.

"More medicine?" exclaimed the doctor; "why, he hasn't taken all I left yesterday?"

"No sir! Ma says howt they shan't nary *drap* on't go in-to him; and she wants some other sort o' doctor stuff!"

Altogether, they seem to be a peculiar people. They are isolated from the social intercourse, which, in the more densely-peopled communities of the mainland, refines and elevates the individual. They look very jealously, I am told, upon strangers; but are clannish, and therefore honest and social among themselves.

I had written thus far this morning, when I was sum-

moned to breakfast. As I was finishing my second cup of coffee, I heard the gruff tones of old Jack. On going out, I found him chaffering with one of the bankers about the price of some figs. The bargain was at length satisfactorily closed.

“Jack,” said I.

“Sah, your servant, maussa.”

“What do you think of these bankers?”

“What do I tink? I isn’t got but one ‘pinion ‘bout dat, Maussa Gregory; an’ dat is, dey is de triflin’est, laziest, most onaccommodatin’——”

“Not *all* of them?”

“No, maussa; not exactly all on ‘em; but when you takes away all of de bad sort, dey isn’t any left!” And Jack chuckled at the wagging of his description.

“Does you know dat man I bought de figs of, Maussa Gregory?”

“No.”

“Well, he’s de son of a man dat was a man o’ some account. Did I ever spin you, Maussa John,” continued he, addressing my friend W——, who had joined us at that moment, “de yarn ob Cap’n Somes, dat was de skipper ob de Anson Bentley in de las’ war?”

“I reckon *not*, Jack.”

“Wal, dat feller’s *his* son. More’s de pity he ain’t more like his father was!”

“Give us the yarn, Jack.”

“Ise mighty *dry* dis mornin’, Maussa John!”

Jack’s thirst was appeased, though not “strictly in accordance with temperance principles,” and he gave us the following story:—

JASPER SOMES; OR, A FIGHT IN THE STAY-SAIL NETTING.

I take the liberty to *translate* the story, as it will save the necessity of deciphering it from the peculiar dialect of the gruff old sailor, and enable me to spare the reader many an unnecessary digression.

It was, then, during “the last war,” as the war of 1812 is usually called—and the precise date is here of no possible importance—that Jasper Somes was given the command of a small brig, of some two hundred and forty tons burthen, pierced for twelve guns, and provided with a swivel, and the necessary munitions of a man-o'-war.

He had been a cabin-boy on board an English vessel in his boyhood. The New World found favor in his eyes, and having few ties to bind him to the mother country (for he was an orphan), the tales he had heard of the ease and rapidity with which merit made its way from the forecastle to the quarter-deck, and of the certainty with which wealth followed promotion, had confirmed his resolution to seek his fortune under the new flag. Nor was he disappointed. On obtaining his discharge at Norfolk (and this was not easily effected, for he was a general favorite with officers and crew), he met, by sheer accident, with one Captain John Henderson.

The boy was strolling about the wharf, where several West Indiamen were lying, nearly ready for sea. He happened to attract the notice of Captain Henderson, who had just been superintending the sending-up of a

new foretopmast, and was leaving the vessel when his eye fell upon young Somes.

"Well, my lad," said the captain, "how do you like the looks of that ship?"

"She looks ship-shape, sir. She has a good bow, and a clean run, and ought to sail. But they'll have to send down that topmast again."

"Why?"

"They have made a mistake in putting on the standin' riggin'."

"The devil they have! You've a sharp eye of your own. You're right. I wasn't here until they began to sway on it. What vessel do you belong to?"

"I don't belong to any, sir. I was cabin-boy on board the *Hero*."

"Would you like to ship?"

"Not as cabin-boy, sir. I want to be a sailor."

"Well, then, before the mast. You shall have ten dollars a-month. Will you go?"

"Yes, sir. Where are you bound?"

"To Rio; be on board at nine o'clock to-morrow, and sign the articles."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Jasper, mechanically; and he walked away with a throb of pleasure at his good fortune. Captain Henderson was evidently pleased with him, and could he retain that favorable impression, there were not many voyages for him before the mast. The next day he signed the articles, and on the third day afterward he saw the last of Cape Henry for some months. Giving all possible attention to his duty, the favorable impression which he had at first made was strengthened and confirmed. He was almost uniformly first on deck after the watch had been called; first to go aloft in a

squall; first upon the footropes in stowing the jib or flying jib. No one ever "growled" at him for a "slow relief" at the wheel, or on the look-out at night; and there was so much cheerfulness in his look, and tone of voice, in obeying orders, that he became a general favorite on board the Admiral, as he had been on board the Hero. Captain Henderson invariably called him aft when he was taking an observation, and it was not long before Jasper became an expert navigator. It was the custom of the captain, too, though not agreeable to the strict *régime* of the quarter-deck, to converse with the boy as he stood at the wheel. This he might safely do; for nothing could divert Jasper's attention from the compass, the head of the ship, and the weather-leach of the mizzen royal, while it was his trick at the wheel.

He continued with Captain Henderson for seven years, during which time he became an expert seaman and a thorough-bred navigator, and had been promoted, step by step, until he attained the berth of mate, or first officer, on board a stanch ship of six hundred and fifty tons. Meanwhile the friendly intimacy between him and the captain had been confirmed, and their intercourse was more like that of father and son than of the captain and his inferior. Captain Henderson had saved enough from his hard-earned wages, first to buy a "piece" of the ship he commanded, then the whole; and finally had accumulated enough to purchase a large landed estate in Nansemond, about forty miles from Norfolk. This he had stocked, and got under successful and profitable cultivation; leaving it, when he was at sea, under the care of a negro, who had so distinguished himself by his honesty and good conduct as to have obtained the post of overseer.

It had been the custom of the captain, whenever Jasper could be spared from the duties of receiving and stowing, or of discharging cargo, to take his favorite to Stalkfield to spend a few days with his family. Mistress Henderson was to the full as fond of the brave, high-spirited boy as was her excellent husband; and Mary Henderson, then about twelve years old, was never weary of listening to the young mariner's tales of the sea, of romping or riding with him about or beyond the plantation.

She was a charming girl, with golden hair, and a profusion of it, a light step, and a smile that boded well for her future character. She was not handsome. She dressed with the severest plainness; but there was something in her eye and manner that never failed to win the heart of even her casual acquaintances. Then she was so affectionate to her father and mother; and the latter being an invalid, Mary was ever near her, ever ministering to her comfort. The captain's pipe and tobacco, and even his boot-jack and slippers were her care. There was no little comfort, or whim, or taste, to which it did not seem to be her special study to gratify.

For the last three voyages, Jasper had not seen her. The mother's health had improved, and Mary had been placed at school. One of these voyages had been to Manilla, another to Valparaiso, and the third to Smyrna; and well-nigh three years had rolled away since Jasper saw her. Those three years, too, were after the arrival of her fourteenth birthday, and Jasper Somes' surprise may be imagined, on finding a woman where he had been expecting a girl. If Mary had been charming as a girl, she was tenfold more charming as the young woman. The romping and giggling had disap-

peared with the girlish costume. "The cast of thought" was on the forehead; and the eye told of soberer and profounder views of life. Indeed, as is always the case, she had become thoughtful, and had invested life with less romance than is usual with girls of her age, because of her constant attendance upon her invalid mother. There is no preacher like Sickness to teach us the "braw sober lessons" of hard-featured, real, tangible, undisguised, every-day life.

Jasper, too, had changed. The frankness and gentleness remained; but the *habit* of command had given his natural *air* a more decided cast. The beardless face had given place to the raven whisker. The sun had left upon the darkened cheek the hue of warmer climes, and the slender, stripling-like limbs of the cabin-boy had expanded into the athletic fullness and sinew of early manhood.

There was, at first, shyness and constraint on the part of both. Jasper, unconscious of the similar change in his own manner, was half vexed with the shyness and reserve of his former companion. Like all other lovers, he endeavored to fathom the cause of it. What *could* it be? As he lay thinking on the matter, late one night, he fell upon what struck him as being a most lucid solution of the mystery.

"I am," said he to himself, "poor. I have no hopes of fortune, or eminence save in these hands of mine, which, I thank God, have thus far proved no unworthy allies. *She* is rich. She can wed above me—immeasurably. She thinks I covet her hand, possibly, for these acres of Stalkfield. By the mane of the sea! she may spare herself the unworthy suspicion. The dawn is not distant, and then good-bye to Stalkfield!"

"What port do you hail from last?" said Mary to her father, as they were preparing to retire on the same evening.

"From Smyrna, my daughter."

"Was it there Jasper got his new invoice of dignity?" asked Mary, with a laugh.

"Nay, my daughter. Jasper has undergone no change that I can perceive; though he *has* seemed a little shy to-day."

"A little *shy*? I'm almost afraid to speak to him; with that gruff voice of his, and those enormous whiskers."

"The voice is just what it should be, Molly, for the quarter-deck; and for the whiskers, I dare say he would be quite willing to part with them, now that summer has come. Good night, my daughter."

"Good night, my dear father."

Breakfast is almost always a silent meal; always so when night has been turned into day, by the demands of fashion; always so when men have lingered late over the dice, the cards and the wine; always after the vigil in the sick-room; always when there is secret grief or ill-feeling in the heart of parent, child, friend, host, or guest.

The breakfast-scene the next morning was the dullest ever known at Stalkfield. Jasper was indeed "dignified." Mary was piqued, and Captain Henderson and his lady were mystified. The good, simple-hearted old captain could not fathom it. Mistress Henderson upset the cream pitcher, and even old Juba seemed to have caught the fidgety feeling.

"Juba, tell Lloyd to bring out my horse, if you please."

"Yes, maussa."

"Why, Jasper, you're not going away? I believe I have your promise to spend a fortnight at Stalkfield. Tut! tut! man! Hold on to your moorings. You—"

"Here's de letter-bag, Maussa John," said old Sam, who had entered unnoticed, with a scrape of his right foot.

"The letters, hey? Let's see. Captain John—that's for me. Give me my glasses, Lloyd. Here's two for you, my daughter. Hillo, Jasper, here's one for *you*, my boy! I think I've seen that hand before. Mightily like Bentley & Dent's head clerk. We'll read 'em over our last cup of coffee."

For a few minutes, not a word was said. The countenance of neither father nor daughter indicated anything specially interesting; one of the letters being from a firm in Norfolk about a proposed voyage to Cayenne; and the other a soul-breathing epistle from a boarding-school crony of Mary's. But Jasper's eyes expanded with a most unmistakable expression of joyful surprise.

"What is it, my boy?" exclaimed Captain Henderson, as he lifted his spectacles over his forehead. "Something pleasant, I'll be sworn."

Jasper handed him the letter.

"May I read it aloud, my boy?"

"Yes, sir, if you choose."

"NORFOLK, June 18th, 1812.

"MR. JASPER SOMES—

"DEAR SIR—You have now been several years in our employ, and it has given us unfeigned pleasure to advance you step by step to the berth of first officer. The

report of Captain Henderson as to your skill as a seaman and navigator, and your good conduct in the commercial transactions connected with the voyage, afford us the anticipated pleasure of offering you the barque *Hesperus*, now nearly ready for sea, and bound to Mahon. Waiting your reply, I am, sir, in behalf of self and partner,

“Your obedient servant,
“ANSON BENTLEY,
“Per JAMES FELTON.”

“D’ye hear *that*, wife? Mary, do you hear that? The *Hesperus*? the prettiest craft that swims, I do believe. I congratulate you, my brave heart of oak. Zounds, man! your fortune’s made! Lloyd, have that horse put back into the stable. You sha’n’t stir from Stalkfield to-day.”

And the delighted captain stalked back and forth, as if he had regained his post on the quarter-deck.

“Jasper, come here! Give me your hand, my boy. My daughter, come here. Give me *yours*. There, now! shake hands and have no more of this pouting.”

“Why, father, I’m sure I——”

“No such a thing! You’ve both been more dignified than an admiral exercising his fleet. Shake hands, now, and make it up directly.”

And Jasper Somes’s valiant and almost wrathful resolves faded away “in tenues duras.”

It was the twentieth day of June, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and twelve. A memorable day for Jasper Somes; for he had that day breathed in the ear of Mary Hendersen the tale of his love. On the morrow he was to leave Stalkfield to superintend the

preparations for his voyage. As the lovers returned from their walk, with hearts too full of happiness to admit of conversation, a servant met them with letters.

Joining Captain Henderson, who was enjoying a pipe in the piazza, the letters were opened.

"News for us!" exclaimed Jasper, handing the open letter to the captain. The old gentleman adjusted his spectacles, and read aloud—

"NORFOLK, June 19th, 1812.

"CAPT. JASPER SOMES:—

"DEAR SIR—Yours of yesterday reached us late last evening. We hasten to inform you that an express arrived at daybreak this morning from Washington. War is declared—war with England. We shall therefore defer the voyage of the *Hesperus*. Meanwhile, we intend to take out letters of marque, and if you are so disposed, you can have the command of the brig *Anson Bentley*, two hundred and forty tons, now fitting for sea. You can pick your own crew, and we beg leave to say that we have entire confidence that you will give a good account of yourself.

"We are, with much respect,

"Your ob't serv'ts,

"BENTLEY, DENT & CO.,

"Per JAS. FELTON."

"Jasper, give us your hand, my boy!" exclaimed the kind-hearted skipper; and throwing his arms around the young sailor, he embraced him. Jasper Somes's eyes glistened with emotion, and the tears started forth upon the furrowed cheeks of the old man as he repeated his congratulations.

"Your fortune's as good as made, you lucky dog ! Your obedient servant, CAPTAIN Somes!" added he, with a mock salaam of affected reverence. "May I bespeak a middy's berth aboard the Anson Bentley ? Think of my head among 'the young gentlemen !'"

Jasper laughed, but made no reply. To say the truth, the memory of that day's interview was far too fresh in the minds of both himself and Mary Henderson to qualify them for a due appreciation of the good fortune that had so aroused the worthy captain's enthusiasm. Mistress Henderson made no other demonstration of her joy than the grasping of the young sailor's hand in both her own, and the utterance of a low, but earnest

"I congratulate you, Jasper. You *deserve it.*"

Three months from that evening, the brig Anson Bentley left the Capes of the Chesapeake. Her crew consisted of seventy men, all told ; young, hardy, energetic men—precisely the sort of crew that it were hazardous for any foe, with not too much odds, to meet. The war was for "sailors' rights," and a spirit had been roused which the stalwart sons of the English marine ultimately found to be troublesome.

A week passed away, and not the gleam of a sail had been seen. It was Saturday evening, and the brig was becalmed. The boatswain's mate had piped to supper, and the messes were chatting and eating between the guns. It was the hour when the crew of a man-o'-war are allowed to talk and sing, and be as merry, within bounds, as they please. Captain Somes was pacing the deck with his first lieutenant, Mr. Trapier, when a flash

of lightning, from a small cloud in the west, arrested the promenade.

"Let the people finish their suppers as soon as may be, Mr. Trapier," said the captain, after a momentary survey of the sky, "and hand the light sails."

"Ay, ay, sir," was the prompt reply, and the brig was soon under snug sail for the night. The threatened squall was long in gathering. It was not until three bells in the mid-watch that it burst upon the vessel. Every necessary precaution had been taken, however, and the brig was under her topsails merely, and ready for the threatened storm. Well was it for all that she was thus in readiness; for the blast came rushing like a war-horse against an enemy's column, causing the brig to heel fearfully to port.

"LUFF!" shouted the officer of the deck, with a voice like a young lion.

"Luff it *is*, sir!" was the reply, and the brig came briskly to the wind. From that time until the dawn of day, the wind, after the first violence of the squall was over, continued to freshen.

"Station the look-outs!" said Captain Somes, as he came on deck, at daybreak.

The order was executed; a man being stationed in the fore and maintopmast-crosstrees.

"Maintopmast-crosstrees!" hailed the captain.

"Sir."

"What's the news there, aloft?"

"Nothing in sight, sir."

"Boatswain's mate, send the boy Fred."

"Ay, ay, sir. You Fred, lay aft there; Captain Somes wants you."

A shrill, treble, boyish voice shouted the customary “Ay, ay!” and Fred Manning ran aft.

“Here, you young powder monkey! carry this ship’s-glass aloft to the look-out.”

“For’ard, sir?”

“No! on the main.”

The look-out took the glass, and adjusting it carefully, began sweeping the horizon.

“Sail O!” shouted he, suddenly.

“Where away?” was the question from the quarter-deck.

“A couple o’ pints on the weather-bow, sir. Looks *large*, sir!”

Captain Somes now went aloft, and, in the course of an hour, had made out the stranger. She was manifestly larger than the brig, a ship, under English colors, and showing a close-reefed fore and mizzen topsail, single-reefed maintopsail and jib.

“Let the drum beat to quarters,” said he, as he jumped from the Jacob’s-ladder on deck. “Keep fast the guns! Be ready there, boarders!”

Pistols and cutlasses were handed from the arm-chest. The crew were speedily armed, and the boatswain piped “All hands! splice the main brace!”

The stranger was now drawing quite near; when suddenly she squared her yards and bore away so as to bring the wind upon her starboard quarter. She was deeply laden, however, and as Captain Somes had “kept away,” it was soon apparent that the brig would speedily overhaul her. The stranger was evidently aware of this; for he hauled his wind and threw his maintopsail to the mast.

"Ship ahoy!" shouted Jasper, as he ran across her stern.

"Hello!"

"What ship is that?"

"The Ayrshire, of Liverpool."

"Strike your colors, then; for you are my prize."

"Never!" shouted the stranger, who evidently had not before heard of the existence of the war; and immediately there was a bustle on board.

The brig, meanwhile, had run across the stranger's stern, and hauled on the wind, so that as the dialogue closed she was forging ahead of the ship.

"Luff!" shouted Jasper; and the brig came briskly into the wind, her jib-boom coming foul of the stranger's bowsprit.

"Follow me, boys!" shouted he; and with a bound he was between the manropes. In another instant he was in the staysail-netting, on the stranger's bowsprit, engaged, hand to hand, with her gallant captain. The brig was, of course, aback; and before a man could follow him, a heavy sea threw the two vessels apart, and Jasper Somes was alone!

"Keep back! all of you!" shouted the English captain to his men, who were about to cut the youth from his resting-place, where he was fighting like a lion at bay. "Let me deal with the Yankee Hotspur!"

Gardez vous bien, Jasper Somes, for thou hast no boy's play before thee—a chest as broad, and an arm as strong, and a heart as brave as thy own. Occupied for the moment by the hand-to-hand struggle, the officers and crew stood in silent admiration of the combatants.

"Huzza!"

The Englishman's cutlass has been struck from his grasp, and it falls into the sea. Jasper throws away his own, scorning to take advantage of so gallant a foe.

"Surrender!" shouted he.

"Never!" said his undaunted foe.

"Then defend yourself!" said Jasper; and he grasped the Englishman and endeavored to hurl him from the nettings. Fearful now was the struggle for the mastery, and the crew of the Englishman stood horror-stricken at the deadly struggle and the peril in which the combatants were placed. The blood of both was up, and now came the terrible struggle for mastery, for life. Jasper's foot slipped, and the Englishman's brawny hand was at his throat, when suddenly his arms were pinioned from behind.

When the brig was taken aback, the first lieutenant had the presence of mind to put the helm hard a-starboard. The brig, of course, fell off; her sails filled, and the young officer ran her jib-boom into the stranger's mizzen rigging. A score of brave fellows rushed on board, the stranger's colors were hauled down, and the boarders were speedily in possession of the deck. Lieutenant Trapier was just in time to save his captain's life, and the Englishman, seeing the condition of his vessel, surrendered,

The stranger was an East Indiaman. A crew was put on board, and on the third day after the capture, the Anson Bentley and her prize anchored in Hampton Roads.

"What became of Jasper, Jack?" asked my friend W—.

"O, he got his pockets full o' prize-money, I've hearn tell. Den he and Miss Mary was spliced, and dey all lib in Nansemond for long time arter de war."

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEPARTURE.

THE last few days of "the season" at NAG'S HEAD are lonely and gloomy to the last degree. Family after family has left you. The remainder are on the wing, and you might call the place, as some one called Dublin, "the most car-driving-est city" in the world. Many a door, at which you have been met with a smile of welcome, is closed. Many a friend, whom even a short acquaintance has rendered dear to you, has departed; and you saunter about the sand-hills with a feverish anxiety for the arrival of the day of your own exodus. I shall not soon forget my emotions, as I saw family after family embark, heard the thousand-times repeated, tear-provoking "good-bye," and gathered my relaxed energies to appear decorously nonchalant.

It was on a bright and beautiful day, the last but one, of September, that I left Nag's Head. J—— was up and dressing when I awoke.

"Good morning, J——."

"Good morning, Mr. Seaworthy. This is your last day with us, I suppose," added he, as he smoothed the last wrinkle in his cravat.

I was about making some reply when I heard the pleasant tones of my friend Dr. A——. On going below, I found him, as usual, making everybody happy by

his inexhaustible fund of chat, and fun, and originality, and animal spirits.

"Thought I'd come and breakfast with you, this morning," said he to Mrs. W—. "We're going away to-day, and Madam A— is upsetting the household gods; the Penetralia all in confusion. I always get out of the way on these occasions. Hate a hubbub as I hate the devil; and we move four times a-year!"

He left us when we had breakfasted. I packed my trunk, and again descended to the sitting-room. I was restless. I went to the piazza. Cely was mending, and Ann sat near her, with brave little John, the baby. Jumper lay sunning himself, and little black Simon was enjoying a similar luxury. We spoke of my departure.

"This is one of the greatest hardships of life to me," said the elder of the two ladies; "to part with a familiar face." Madame W— gave me a cordial invitation to visit them at H—, and her fine eyes glistened as she did so.

The hour came. With stifling sensations at my throat, I shook hands with all, and bade them farewell. In a few minutes, I was on board the white-winged packet. Furniture, horses, the cow, and the luggage were soon on board; the chain rattled on the windlass, the sails went up "with a will," and I bade Nag's Head also farewell.

A WORD AT PARTING.

MY DEAR READER—for dear art thou to me, whatsoever thou art, that has followed me through these desultory and unworthy sketches of NAG'S HEAD—thy hand again at parting. The frost has come. The

pulse of health comes back to me. I am better. The fresh north wind blows through the lattice upon my forehead as I write.

I.

THE WIND OF THE NORTH! O, it comes from the hills,
From lands at whose *name* drowsy memory thrills,
With beauty and freshness from earth and the wave,
And stays the frail step on the verge of the grave.

II.

The wind of the North! As the ears of the steed
To note of the pulse-stirring bugle gives heed,
My heart leaps again, as it bringeth to me
The strength of the Northward, the air of the free.

III.

The wind of the North! welcome wind of the North,
With health and with iron arms journeying forth;
Thou dalliest never with charnel-house air,
But leavest the joy of thy purity *there*.

IV.

The wind of the North! nor in marsh nor in fen
It maketh its home; but to dwellings of men
It bears home the anthem of torrents and rills,
And gladdens the hearth with the glee of the hills.

V.

The wind of the North! bless thee, wind of *my home!*
How long o'er the earth and the sea shall I roam,
My heart ever yearning for home's winter fires,
The faces, the hearts of the home of my sires?

We have jogged on right cosily together, and our roads here separate. If the way has been half as pleasant to thee as it hath been to thy fellow-traveler, it shall go hard if the chances of travel do not bring us again in company. *Bon voyage* and *au revoir!*

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The following synopsis embraces only the main heads of each Chapter and Paragraph.

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|--|---|
| CHAP. 1. <i>Introductory Remarks.</i> | Spermaceti, Delphinine, Neats feet Oil. |
| " 2. <i>The Dignity of the Art and its Relations to Science.</i> | CHAP. 17. <i>The Constituents of Fats, their Properties and Composition:</i> Stearine, Stearic Acid and Salts; Margarine, Margaric Acid and Salts; Olein, Oleic Acid and Salts; Cetine, Cetyllic Acid; Phoenine, Phoenic Acid and Salts; Butyrine, Butyric Acid and Salts; Caproic, Capric Acid; Hiricine, Hircic Acid; Cholesterine. |
| " 3. <i>Affinity and Chemical Equivalents:—Explanation of.</i> | " 18. <i>Basic Constituents of Fats:—Glycerin Ethal.</i> |
| " 4. <i>Alkalies.—Lime, Potassa, Soda, Ammonia.</i> | " 19. <i>Theory of Saponification.</i> |
| " 5. <i>Alkalimetry.</i> | " 20. <i>Utensils:—Steam Series, Bugabiers or Ley Vats, Soap Frames, Caldrons, &c.</i> |
| " 6. <i>Acids.—Carbonic, Sulphuric, Hydrochloric, Nitric, Boracic. Acidimetry.</i> | " 21. <i>The Systemized arrangement for a Soap Factory.</i> |
| " 7. <i>Origin and Composition of Fatty Matters.</i> | " 22. <i>Remarks,—Preliminary to the Process for Making Soap.</i> |
| " 8. <i>Saponifiable Fats.—Oils of Almond, Olive, Mustard, Beech, Poppy, Rapeseed, Grapeseed; Nut Oil, Linseed Oil, Castor Oil, Palm Oil, (processes for bleaching it;) Coco Butter, Nutmeg Butter, Galum Butter, Athamantine.</i> | " 23. <i>Hard Soaps:—“Cutting Process;” Comparative Value of Oils and Fats as Soap ingredient, with Tables; White, Mottled, Marseilles, Yellow, Yankee Soaps; English Yellow and White Soap, Coco Soap, Palm Soap, Butter Soap, English Windsor Soap, French Windsor Soap. Analyses of Soaps.</i> |
| " 9. <i>Adulteration of Oils.</i> | " 24. <i>Process for Making Soap:—Preparation of the Leys, Empatage, Relargage, Coction, Mottling, Cooling.</i> |
| " 10. <i>Action of Acids upon Oils.</i> | " 25. <i>Extemporaneous Soaps:—Lard, Medicinal, “Hawes,” “Maquer,” and “Darcey’s” Soaps</i> |
| " 11. <i>Volatile Oils.—The Properties of, and their applicability to the Manufacture of Soaps.</i> | " 26. <i>Silicated Soaps:—Flint, Sand, “Dunn’s,” “Davis’s” Soaps.</i> |
| " 12. <i>Volatile Oils:—Their Origin and Composition; Table of their Specific Gravities.</i> | |
| " 13. <i>Essential Oils:—The Adulterations of, and the modes of detecting them.</i> | |
| " 14. <i>Wax:—Its Properties and Composition.</i> | |
| " 15. <i>Resins:—Their Properties and Composition; Colophony and Galipot.</i> | |
| " 16. <i>Animal Fats and Oils:—Lard, Mutton Suet, Beef-tallow, Beef-marrow, Bone-fat, Soap-grease, Oil-lees, Kitchen-stuff, Human-fat, Adipocire, Butter, Fish-oil,</i> | |

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| CHAP. 27. <i>Patent Soaps</i> .—Dextrine, Salinated Soaps, Soap from Hardened Fat. | Modes of Rendering Fats, "Wilson's Steam Tanks." |
| " 28. <i>Anderson's Improvements</i> . | CHAP. 42. <i>Wicks</i> :—Their use and action. Cutting Machines. |
| " 29. <i>Soft Soaps</i> :—Process for Making, Crown Soaps, "Savon Vert." | " 43. <i>Of the Manufacture of Candles</i> . |
| " 30. <i>The Conversion of Soft Soaps into Hard Soaps</i> . | " 44. <i>Dipped Candles</i> :—Improved Machinery for facilitating their Manufacture. |
| " 31. <i>Frauds in Soap Making and Means for their Detection</i> . | " 45. <i>Material of Candles</i> :—Process for Improving its Quality. |
| " 32. <i>Earthy Soaps, Marine Soap, Metallic Soaps, Ammoniacal Soap</i> . | " 46. <i>Moulded Candles</i> :—Improved Machinery for facilitating their Manufacture.—"Vaxeme," or Summer Candles. |
| " 33. <i>Soap from Volatile Oils</i> :—Starkey's Soap, Action of Alkalies upon Essential Oils. | " 47. <i>Stearic Acid Candles</i> :—Adamantine and Star Candles. |
| " 34. " <i>Savons Acides</i> ," or Oleo-acidulated Soap. | " 48. <i>Stearin Candles</i> :—Braconnot's and Morfit's Process. |
| " 35. <i>Toilet Soaps</i> :—Purification of Soaps, Admixed Soap, Cinnamon, Rose, Orange-flower, Bouquet, Benzoin, Cologne, Vanilla, Musk, Naples, Kasan Soaps, Flotant Soaps, Transparent Soaps, Soft Soaps, Shaving Cream; Remarks. | " 49. <i>Sperm Candles</i> . |
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| " 37. <i>Weights and Measures</i> . | " 51. <i>Wax Candles</i> :—Mode of Bleaching the Wax, with drawings of the apparatus requisite therefor; Bougies, Cierges, Flambeaux. |
| " 38. <i>Candles</i> . | " 52. <i>Patent Candles</i> :—"Azotized," Movable Wick and Goddard's Candles; Candles on Continuous Wick; Water and Hour Bougies, Perfumed Candles. |
| " 39. <i>Illumination</i> . | " 53. <i>Concluding Remarks. Vocabulary</i> . |
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